Famous Women

Hannah More

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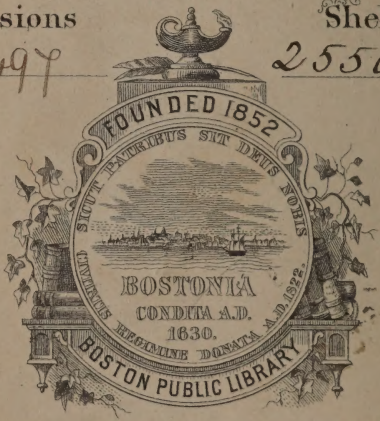

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Famous Women.

HANNAH MORE.

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HANNAH MORE.

BY

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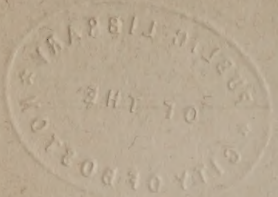

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HANNAH MORE.

CHAPTER I.

STAPYLTON.

HANNAH MORE may be reckoned as standing at the parting point of two periods, — the one ending at the days when clergymen and schoolmasters were considered to be an inferior class; the other beginning at the time when their position had become a high one. Again, she was at first a brilliant member of the Bas Bleu Society, — the faint English reflection of the Hôtel de Rambouillet; and afterwards shared with Mrs. Trimmer the honor of making English ladies the foremost agents in the religious education of the poor. A writer at first of the plays and poems which were the fashion of the Eighteenth Century, she afterwards devoted her talents to the lighter forms of religious literature for the masses, and again was a pioneer; and lastly, she wrote treatises on education, morals, and

religion, which had great effect on her own generation. Her excellence and devotion have in a manner obscured her fame, and the many who are inclined to take her as an impersonation of what is impertinently called "goodiness," have no idea of her talents, or of the society she had enjoyed. The friend of Garrick, Horace Walpole, and Johnson, was no narrow-minded woman absorbed in village gossip.

The family from which she sprang was one of the old Puritan stocks of Norfolk, which furnished many of Oliver Cromwell's Ironsides. Two great-uncles of her father had been captains in the days of the Protector, and her grandmother had stories to tell of nocturnal meetings for Presbyterian worship, in the time of the Five-Mile Act; and would assure her children that the way to value Gospel privileges was to have to struggle through snow and rain at midnight, and then to listen to the minister while the door was guarded by one of the congregation with a drawn sword.

This grandmother, however, Hannah never knew; and though the rest of the family continued Presbyterian, Jacob More, her father, was a strong Churchman and Tory, in consequence perhaps of his education at the Norwich Grammar School, where he was a distinguished pupil.

He hoped to have become a clergyman, but a lawsuit turning out unsuccessfully on his part, left him so penniless that he was thankful to Lord Bottetourt for an appointment to a small foundation school in Somersetshire. Probably his change of principles had cut him off from the rest of his family, for they seem to have kept up no connection with him till after his daughter had made herself a name; and he accommodated himself to a position then viewed as very humble by marrying a farmer's daughter, who was a good sensible woman of plain education.

Stapylton, the school which he held, has shared the fate of numerous small grammar-schools scattered over the country, and is no more. The room where he taught is now used for parish purposes and absorbed into Fisherton itself, almost a suburb of Bristol, and well known as containing — very appropriately — a Training School for Mistresses, who ought to look back to Hannah More as one of the very first in the path they are to tread.

Between the years 1736 and 1747, five daughters were born to Mr. and Mrs. More, — Mary, Elizabeth, Sarah, Hannah, and Martha. Good abilities seem to have been the family heritage; but Hannah was soon acknowledged as the clev-

erest of the five. When at three years old her mother began to teach her to read, she proved to have already learned much in play from her sisters; and, a year later, she distinguished herself when catechised in the parish church.

Their nurse had been in the service of Dryden, and had been impressed with his fame. Little Hannah used to beg for stories of him, and it would be amusing to know what ideas she thus imbibed of "Glorious John." Her two ambitions were curiously gratified; namely, to live in a cottage too low for a clock, and to go to London to see bishops and booksellers.

There were very few books in the house, for almost all Mr. More's library had been lost on the journey from Norfolk; but he had a memory so well stored that he taught his children history by word of mouth, and sometimes delighted his own ears and theirs by rolling out poems or orations in Latin or Greek. His intelligent little girls must have been no small refreshment to him after his grinding work on his regular pupils; and he gratified Hannah's ardent wishes, backed by her mother, by beginning to teach her Latin and mathematics. He was soon alarmed at the way in which she outstripped his boys, and fearing that the reputation of being a learned lady would be a dis-

advantage to her, he insisted on dropping the mathematical studies, and was with difficulty persuaded to go on with the classical readings.

Mary More, the eldest sister, was meantime sent as a weekly boarder to a French school at Bristol, coming home from Saturday till Monday, and then imparting the results of her studies to the younger ones, — and with so much success that Hannah was afterwards enabled to act as interpreter to some French officers, who were living near Bristol as prisoners on parole, during the war of the Austrian Succession, and who frequented Mr. More's house.

The little bright-eyed, quick-witted girl was always picking up information, or writing poems and tales on scraps of paper. Her lesser sister, Martha, always entirely one with her, used to creep down after they were in bed to secure these fragments of paper, and then to hoard them in the housemaid's closet: it was the prime ambition of the pair to possess a whole quire of paper, and when this was given them by the kind mother, it seemed at first inexhaustible. We long to know more of that good mother, who must have been an excellent and wise woman; but she is never again mentioned in the biographies, nor do we even know the date of her death.

CHAPTER II.

BRISTOL.

MARY MORE'S talent for teaching and governing must have made itself evident, for she was only twenty-one when by the assistance of friends a house was taken in Bristol for a young ladies' school, of which she was manager, Betty acting as housekeeper and Sally as assistant teacher; Hannah, at twelve years old, and Patty at ten, were pupils.

Mary must have been a most remarkable young woman to carry through such an undertaking, not only with complete success, but in perfect harmony with sisters so little younger than herself.

Sally's description of their attempt was thus made to Dr. Johnson: —

"We were born with more desires than guineas. As years increased our appetites, the cupboard at home grew too small to gratify them; and with a bottle of water, a bed, and a blanket, we set out to seek our fortunes. We found a great house with nothing in it (and it was like to remain so) till, looking into our

knowledge-boxes, we happened to find a little *larning*, — a good thing when land is gone, or rather none ; and so at last, by giving a little of this *larning* to those who had none, we got a good store of gold in return."

What did these young ladies teach? It is plain, from the letters of all, that they thoroughly understood their mother tongue, thanks to their scholarly father; and they probably gave what is now called an English education, including the arts of good reading and elocution; French and Italian they also taught, and needle-work was then a high art. Miss More's pupils were well thought of for the complete grounding they received.

The change gave Hannah access to a feast of books, especially Shakspeare and Milton and others, among which the " Spectator " was her favorite and her model in the attempts at writing, which continued to be her delight. One of her first compositions that saw the light was an ode on some lectures on eloquence which Sheridan had been giving at Bristol. It was shown to him by a friend, and was good enough to excite surprise that the writer should be a girl of sixteen.

A little later the fever of the drama set in upon the pupils; and Hannah, at seventeen, produced a play for their acting, entitled " The

Search after Happiness," — a highly-improving pastoral, wherein a party of young ladies, weary of themselves and of the world, go to consult a worthy shepherdess, by name Urania, telling her, —

> "'Tis happiness we seek. Oh! deign to tell
> Where the coy fugitive delights to dwell."

There is Euphelia, the vain beauty, bred in the regal splendor of a court; Cleora, the learned damsel, who confesses, —

> "This the chief transport I from science drew,
> That all might know how much Cleora knew."

Then there is the dreamy, novel-reading maiden, Pastorella, saying, —

> "I scorned the manners of the world I saw,
> My guide was fiction, and romance my law."

And, lastly, the gentle Laurinda "never wished to learn, nor cared to know;" so that she is "in sense a woman, but in soul a child." Urania moralizes appropriately to each damsel, and dismisses them all greatly edified.

The absence of all excitement, and especially its freedom from perilous male characters, recommended "The Search after Happiness" to all the ladies' schools.

There is no more delightful chapter in Miss

Mitford's sketches than where she describes the getting up of this highly-improving comedy at the school she attended at Reading. There is something grotesque in the moralizings of the school-girl of seventeen about the ennui and unsatisfactoriness of the great world of which she knew so little, yet the language and versification make it a really remarkable achievement for a girl of her age, and it procured her some consideration in society.

In spite of ill health and constantly-recurring severe headaches, probably nervous, she was evidently a very pretty girl, with delicate refined features, rather sharply cut, and beautiful keen, dark eyes, which were enhanced in brilliancy by the whiteness of her powdered hair. Her conversation was charming. She was just the sort of young creature whose fresh, innocent intelligence is specially captivating to the elderly men with whom she converses, fearless of all idea of coquetry. Once, when very unwell, she so delighted her physician by her discussion of some book that he entirely forgot that she was his patient, and after taking leave, returned with, "And how are you, my poor child?"

She studied Latin, Spanish, and Italian, and exercised herself in poetical translations, most of which she afterwards destroyed as worthless;

but she attained to such facility that at an Italian opera, to gratify the friend beside her, she scribbled an English version, which was at once printed by the local newspaper.

The other sisters enjoyed her successes without a shade of jealousy. They seemed to have equalled her in all but depth of learning and faculty of composition, and perhaps in wit and vivacity in public, though at home Sally was considered the wag. They were in the best society of the old merchant city, numbering among their friends Dean Tucker and Dr. Langhorne, whom Hannah had met at Weston-super-Mare, and who asked her to correspond with him. Dr. James Stonehouse was also on intimate terms with the sisters. They also knew a Mr. Peach, who had helped Hume to correct his history. In fact, the professional society of Bristol was evidently of a superior order, and, as was the case in other old cathedral towns, included persons in trade who were often as cultured as the classes higher in social rank. Poor Chatterton was living his strange life there; and it will be further remembered that here dwelt Amos Cottle, bookseller, who afterwards appreciated the Lake poets in their crude youth; and here, too, worked as dressmakers the ladies who married Southey and Coleridge.

Bristol was a great centre of operations to Charles Wesley, but Methodism never seems to have attracted the More sisters. They were thoughtful, religious women after the eighteenth-century pattern, devout and careful of their own souls, but never looking beyond the ordinary duties about them.

It is rather curious in these days to see the utter insensibility to church architecture in those times. Though she lived in the city of St. Mary Redcliffe, near the Mayor's chapel, as well as the Cathedral, and within reach of Wells and Glastonbury, there is not a single reference to their beauty in any of Hannah More's letters; and it may be doubted whether she had any notion of admiring natural scenery beyond the trim garden and shady park, — though perhaps she loved it more than she knew, for picnics among the lovely Clifton rocks and woods were the holiday recreation of the sisterhood. She certainly, in all her works, seems to feel that "the proper study of mankind is man."

However, at this period she was to study man in a new and more trying light. Two young ladies named Turner, who were among the pupils, always spent their holidays with their guardian cousin the Squire of Belmont, — a house very beautifully placed on a kind of natural terrace

on the steep slope of hills extending above the valley of the Avon. They were encouraged to invite their friends to come with them. Hannah and Patty, then twenty-two and twenty, were of the party, and there was much planning of walks and landscape gardening. Hannah wrote inscriptions for favored spots, and these Mr. Turner, with more courtesy than taste, caused to be painted in black and white on boards exactly like notices to trespassers, and affixed to trees, where they were extant within the last forty years.

All this led to the natural result. Mr. Turner fell in love with the bright young poetess, and though he was twenty years her elder, she accepted him, gave up her interest in the school, and purchased her *trousseau*. The wedding day was fixed, but the gentleman continually deferred it, until the family became indignant, and Sir James Stonehouse, an intimate friend, was called into their counsels, and the engagement was broken off. Mr. Turner was anxious to make some sort of compensation in money, but this the lady refused. He persisted, however; and Sir James Stonehouse, without her knowledge, became trustee for an annuity which was settled upon her, and which she was finally induced to accept.

Every one agreed that no blame attached to her in this strange affair, — the result probably of an elderly man growing shy, and fearing to have rashly committed himself. He always spoke of Hannah with the greatest respect, and at his death bequeathed to her one thousand pounds. But this unfortunate experience, when she must have suffered grievously, steeled her heart against other offers, and she rejected one that was made to her a little later. This matter may be held to have been the end of her joyous girlhood, and to have ushered in the second period of her life, — her brilliant womanhood.

CHAPTER III.

THE LONDON WORLD.

THE private income which Mr. Turner's annuity placed at Hannah More's disposal set her free from the obligations of the school, and enabled her to gratify her longings to behold a larger, fuller world than that of Bristol, —

> "Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
> Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field."

Her letters are undated, but it must have been in 1772 or 1773 that she first plunged into the new life of London, when she was twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old. These were the days when the evils of the Court of George II. had not become unfashionable, in spite of the influence of George III. and Queen Charlotte. The philosophy of Voltaire and Rousseau was affected by the more pretentious; there was much open and unblushing immorality in the higher ranks; card-playing for large sums of money was almost universal; and the routs and mas-

querades described in "Sir Charles Grandison" and "Evelina" may be taken as types of the favorite diversions of the young and lively in —

> "The teacup times of hood and hoop,
> And when the patch was worn."

There were, however, other circles. There was that which was sometimes called that of the Wits, which assembled at their headquarters at St. James's Coffee House, and which Goldsmith so ably sketched in "Retaliation," — though he durst not there touch on the elephant of this true menagerie of lions, Samuel Johnson, or his satellite Boswell, and contented himself with describing those of lesser pretension, such as Edmund Burke, —

> "Though equal to all things, for all things unfit,
> Too nice for a statesman, too proud for a wit,
> For a patriot too cool, for a drudge disobedient,
> And too fond of the right to pursue the expedient."

There, too, was Sir Joshua Reynolds, —

> "Still born to improve us in every part,
> His pencil our faces, his manners our heart;"

and David Garrick, the great actor, "an abridgment of all that is pleasant in man."

And connected with these by intellect and taste, as well as with the higher aristocracy by

birth and rank, was the Bas Bleu, a society of ladies, of whom the foremost was Mrs. Montagu, the daughter of a Yorkshire squire, and whose husband, Edward Montagu, was the grandson of the Earl of Sandwich. She was very charming in conversation, and had obtained considerable celebrity by publishing a vindication of Shakspeare against the attacks of Voltaire, — somewhat disappointing to read after seeing all the encomiums lavished on it, but a wonderful performance for a woman at that time. Her house, at the corner of Portman Square, was one of the old aristocratic mansions enclosed in a court, and here on May Day she was wont to give a dinner to the chimney-sweeps of London. One of her rooms had hangings of peacocks' feathers, admired and be-rhymed at that time, but thought less beautiful by the next generation. Other members of this delightful society were — Mrs. Vesey, called by her friends the Sylph, wife of a member of the Irish Parliament; Mrs. Delany, of the old loyal Granville family, and wife of Dean Delany, is well known through Lady Hall's biography; Mrs. Boscawen, the widow of a distinguished admiral, and a woman of high culture; Mrs. Chapone, noted for some excellent letters to her niece on self-culture; and Elizabeth Carter, daughter to the perpetual curate of Deal,

knew about nine languages, and had translated Epictetus from the Greek.

Frances Reynolds, who kept house for her brother Sir Joshua, had not brought from Devonshire any extraordinary attainments, but she was an agreeable, intelligent woman, who knew how to do what the French call *tenir un salon*, and her drawing-room was one of the points of contact between the Wits and the Bas Bleus. To her Hannah carried letters of introduction when she set forth, with Patty and an unnamed friend, on what was then a perilous journey, whether by post-chaise or stage-coach, through ditch-like roads beset by highwaymen. However, neither then nor in her thirty-seven subsequent journeys does she seem to have met with any accident.

When settled in lodgings in Henrietta Street, the first experience of the sisters was the sight of the new comedy, Sheridan's "Rivals," with which Hannah does not seem to have been greatly impressed. "For my own part," she says, "I think he ought to be treated with great indulgence; much is to be forgiven in an author of three-and-twenty, whose genius is likely to be his principal inheritance. I love him for the sake of his ingenious and admirable mother. On the whole I was tolerably entertained."

It seems that the play was sacrificed by bad

acting, especially of the part of Sir Lucius O'Trigger. But little did Hannah or the public guess that this almost unsuccessful drama would furnish household words long after the popular favorites of the day were forgotten. Soon after followed an entertainment at the amiable Sir Joshua Reynolds's, where the party dined, drank tea, and supped, and did not come away till one o'clock. There must have been at least eight hours of the "brilliant circle of both sexes, not in general literary, though partly so."

It must have been mid-winter, for in the next letter, written after visiting Hampton Court and Twickenham, she speaks of the Thames being frozen. This visit failed in making her acquainted with Dr. Johnson: that "Idler, that Rambler," she says, "was out of town." But Miss Reynolds promised to introduce her to him whenever it should be possible. The publisher Cadell, who was, like herself, a native of Stapylton, interested her by telling her that he had sold four thousand copies of the "Journey to the Hebrides" in the first week. "It is an agreeable work," says Hannah, "*though the subject is sterility itself*," — another instance of the insensibility of the time to the marvels of nature.

But another great wish was fulfilled: she saw

Garrick in some of his most famous parts, and a letter she wrote, describing him as King Lear, was handed about by her friends, and prepared the way for her introduction to him when she went to London the following year with her two sisters, Sally and Patty, both of whom were capital letter-writers.

David Garrick was then about sixty-five years old, and was on the point of retiring from the stage. He was a gentleman by birth, grandson to one of the exiles of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and had worked as an assistant master in Dr. Johnson's school at Edial, in Leicestershire, and when both grew sick of the undertaking, had gone with him to seek his fortune in London. There, after attempting to be a wine merchant, by (as Foote averred) living in a cellar with three quarts of vinegar, Garrick found his vocation in the theatre. His talents raised him to the first eminence as an actor, and by-and-by he became manager of Drury Lane Theatre. The stage, as he conducted it, so engrossed people's minds that it was even called "the Fourth Estate." He married Eva Maria Veigel, a young Austrian dancer, who at Vienna had been so much admired by one of the young archdukes that, though her conduct was irreproachable, the Empress

Maria Theresa thought it wise to send her out of reach. La Violetta as she was called, by her beauty, grace, and an unusual charm of manner, at once gained the heart of the English Roscius. He married her as soon as possible, and never let her perform publicly again. It was a most happy marriage. She remained a Roman Catholic, and always retained her foreign manner and accent, which seem to have given a piquancy to her conversation; but she was an excellent mistress in his two houses at the Adelphi and at Hampton, and was received cordially in society. Indeed, Garrick kept his home entirely apart from his profession, and Mrs. Montagu declared that she had only once met an actor there, and never had seen a card in it.

The Garricks were curious to see the lady who had written the letter about King Lear, and no sooner did they meet her than a liking began, which ripened into a strong friendship. At their house, the next day, Hannah met Mrs. Montagu; and Miss Reynolds immediately after procured her a meeting with Dr. Johnson himself, who astonished her by coming forward to meet her with Sir Joshua's macaw on his arm, and repeating the first verse of a morning hymn which she had written. Then followed an intro-

duction to Edmund Burke, "the sublime and beautiful Edmund Burke," as Sally wrote; and altogether the sisters were made free of what was probably the choicest circle of intelligent society then in existence, — not so brilliant, original, or elegant as those salons at Paris, where "philosophy" was already preparing the way for change, but infinitely purer, deeper, and more conscientious, and with no lack of vivacity.

The three sisters, with their high cultivation, lively manners, country simplicity, and warm enthusiasm, must have been delightful to their new friends, who were for the most part by a good many years their senior, and must have looked on them as mere girls. Miss Reynolds delighted them by proposing to take them to visit Dr. Johnson in his own house at Bolt Court, where he had given shelter to a broken-down surgeon and three destitute ladies, — one of them, Anna Williams, an old friend of his late wife, being blind, and with such a temper that he paid half-a-crown a week extra to the servants to put up with her.

Sally More thus describes the visit: —

"After having had a call from Dr. Percy, the Collector of the 'Reliques of Poetry,' — quite a sprightly modern, not a rusty antique, as I expected, — Miss Reynolds ordered the coach to take us to Dr. Johnson's very

own house. Yes, Abyssinia's Johnson! Dictionary's Johnson! Rambler's, Idler's, and Irene's Johnson! Can you picture to yourselves the palpitation of our hearts as we approached his mansion? The conversation turned on a new work of his just going to the press ('The Tour to the Hebrides'), and his old friend Richardson. Mrs. Williams, the blind poet, who lives with him, was introduced to us. She is engaging in her manner, her conversation lively and entertaining. Miss Reynolds told the Doctor of all our rapturous exclamations on the road. He shook his scientific head at Hannah, and said she was '*a silly thing.*' When our visit was ended he called for his hat (as it was raining) to attend us down a very long entry to our coach, and not Rasselas could have acquitted himself more *en cavalier*. We are engaged with him at Sir Joshua's, Wednesday evening. What do you think of us?

"I forgot to mention that, not finding Johnson in his little parlor when we came in, Hannah seated herself in his great chair, hoping to catch a little of his genius; when he heard it he laughed heartily, and told her it was a chair on which he never sat. He said it reminded him of Boswell and himself when they stopped a night at the spot (as they imagined) where the weird Sisters appeared to Macbeth; the idea so worked on their enthusiasm that it quite deprived them of rest. However, they learned the next morning, to their mortification, that they had been deceived, and were quite in another part of the country."

A few weeks later Sally writes, —

"Tuesday evening we drank tea at Sir Joshua's with Dr. Johnson. Hannah is certainly a great favorite. She was placed next to him, and they had the entire conversation to themselves. They were both in remarkably high spirits: it was certainly her lucky night. I never heard her say so many good things. The Old Genius was extremely jocular, and the young one very pleasant. You would have imagined we had been at some comedy had you heard our peals of laughter. They indeed tried which could pepper the highest, and it is not clear to me that the lexicographer was really the highest seasoner."

It has been said that Johnson was importuned by Hannah's compliments, and that he once told her that she should consider what her praise was worth before she was so lavish of it. That he may have said something of the kind in an ill-humor is quite possible; but it is evident that he was very fond of her in general, and that her bright readiness and power of repartee amused him greatly. It was an age of compliments that would now sound fulsome, if not absurd, and Hannah was a demonstrative person, so that what seems like flattery was the expression of genuine enthusiasm, and was usually accepted as such. From her letters, the drollery of Hannah can quite be per-

ceived. For instance, she writes to one of her sisters, —

> "Bear me, some god, O quickly bear me hence,
> To wholesome Solitude, the nurse of —

'sense' I was going to add, in the words of Pope, till I recollected that *pence* had a more appropriate meaning."

CHAPTER IV.

HANNAH AS A POETESS.

AFTER the feast of compliments and civilities that she had received, Hannah said to her sisters on her return to Bristol, "I have been so fed with flattering attentions that I think I will venture to try what is my real value by writing a slight poem, and offering it to Cadell myself."

Accordingly she produced a melancholy ballad, by name "Sir Eldred of the Bower," on the model of those collected by Dr. Percy: —

> "There was a young and valiant knight,
> Sir Eldred was his name;
> And never did a worthier knight
> The rank of knighthood claim."

The versification is smooth, the story the same as that of the old ballad of Gil Morice, anticipating the catastrophe of Rokeby, by which Mortham mistakes his wife's brother for a former lover, and kills him in her arms, causing thus her death and eliciting the moral, —

"The deadliest wounds with which we bleed,
Our crimes inflict alone;
Man's mercies from God's hand proceed,
His miseries from his own."

To this she added some verses written at the time of her visits to Belmont, where there is a red rock with a little stream proceeding from it, in a sort of scaur, overgrown with copsewood. Tradition connected with it a story of the time of the Roman occupation of Britain, of a maiden who pined away like Echo on being neglected by her lover: —

"Then strange to tell, if rural folks say true,
To hardened rock the stiffening damsel grew.
No more her shapeless features can be known,
Stone is her body, and her limbs are stone."

When the tidings reached the swain, he rushed to the spot and stabbed himself, the dagger piercing to the stone, so that blood issued from it: —

"And though revolving ages since have passed
The melting torrents undiminished last."

Armed with these poems, Hannah went to London with Sally in 1776. The result of her criterion was triumphant, though it is only a proof of the evanescence of success. Cadell

gave her far more for the verses than she had dared to expect, and promised to raise the sum to whatever Goldsmith (dead three years previously) had received for "The Deserted Village."

Mrs. Montagu wrote, —

"I admire the felicity of your muse in being able to do equal justice to the calm magnanimity of the Romans, and the spirit and fire of the Gothic character. If I were writing to any one but yourself, I should indulge in making a thousand remarks on the beautiful simplicity of your tale. . . . Let me beg you, my dear madam, still to allow your muse to adorn British places and British names. Wherever you lead the fairy dance, flowers will spring up, your rock will stand unimpaired by ages, as eminent as any in the Grecian Parnassus."

This excellent lady was as highly cultivated as any of her time, so that it is the more comical to find her admiring the simplicity of the taste and the correctness of the manners. The Romans were probably the Polydore and Ianthe of the Rock, who evinced their calm magnanimity by suicide and petrifaction, and the unfortunate Sir Eldred and his Bertha were the Goths. Johnson scorned the genuine article discovered by Dr. Percy, and parodied it with, —

"I put my hat upon my head,
And went into the Strand;
And there I met another man,
With his hat in his hand."

But he patronized Sir Eldred, even adding this stanza to Sir Eldred's wooing: —

"My scorn has oft the dart repelled
Which guileful beauty threw;
But goodness heard, and grace beheld,
Must every heart subdue."

Miss Reynolds told the sisters that Sir Eldred was the theme in all polite circles, and that "the beauteous Bertha has kindled a flame in the cold bosom of Johnson."

Garrick was equally delighted, and read the verses aloud to select audiences with all the effect of his perfect elocution. On one of these occasions Hannah wrote, —

"I think I never was so ashamed in my life, but he read it so superlatively that I cried like a child. Only think what a scandalous thing to cry at one's own poetry! I could have beaten myself, for it looked as if I thought it very moving, which, I can truly say, is far from being the case. But the beauty of the jest lies in this. Mrs. Garrick twinkled as well as I, and made as many apologies for crying at her husband's reading as I did for crying at my own verses. *She* got out of the

scrape by pretending she was touched at the story, and *I* by saying the same thing of the reading. It furnished us with a great laugh at the catastrophe, when it would really have been decent to have been a little sorrowful."

Garrick further wrote a poem representing the male sex as mortified by the success of a female performance, till Apollo appears and claims it: —

> "'True!' cries the god of verse, 't is mine,
> And now the farce is o'er;
> To vex proud man, I wrote each line,
> And gave them Hannah More!'"

"Nine," as uniting all the nine Muses in one, was Garrick's pet name for the lady. It was a wonderful season for her, though one drawback to her good taste was the style of dress, which it was necessary in some degree to follow. She writes, —

"Some ladies carry on their heads a large quantity of fruit, and yet they would despise a poor useful member of society who carried it there for the purpose of selling it. Some at the back of their perpendicular caps hang three or four ostrich feathers of different colors."

Surely Hannah must have concocted with Garrick the head-dress with which he put these

enormities out of fashion by appearing on the stage in the character of Sir John Brute with a whole kitchen garden on his head, including glass cucumber frames, and a pendent carrot at each ear.

He had sold the patent of Drury Lane, and was going through all his great parts for the last time. To his devoted admirer, Hannah, the sight appeared, she said, "like assisting at the funeral obsequies of the poets who had conceived them;" but she wrote some lively verses in the character of Dragon, the watch-dog at Mr. Garrick's house at Hampton, describing his pleasure in his master's return.

Since Hannah More had become famous, her father's Norfolk relations recollected her existence, and she was invited to pay a visit to a family named Colton, living at Bungay. There she found even the London ladies' head-gear surpassed at a family party where there were eleven damsels. "I protest I hardly do them justice," she says, "when I pronounce that they had among them, on their heads, an acre and a half of shrubbery, besides slopes, grass plats, tulip beds, clumps of peonies, kitchen gardens and greenhouses."

The Colton family themselves seem to have been good and congenial people; but after some

two months, Hannah rejoined the Garricks at Hampton, and went with them to pay a visit to Mr. Wilmot's at Farnborough, where she met Dr. and Mrs. Kennicott. The Doctor was Hebrew Professor at Oxford, and his wife had learned the language in order to be able to copy for him. This was the beginning of another of Miss More's life friendships. On the Sunday evening, when music was talked of, Garrick turned to her and said, "Nine, you are a Sunday woman; retire to your room, I will recall you when the music is over."

The Garricks were both revising Hannah's present undertaking. "A German commentator will suck an author dry," wrote David, to frighten the authoress, when the work was in his wife's hands. For a successful tragedy was the prime achievement expected of all who, in the language of the day, aspired to be denizens of Parnassus. Hannah had long ago half translated, half imitated, Metastasio's drama of "Attilio Regulo," and called her work "The Inflexible Captive." It was brought out this summer at the theatre at Bath, and to the author's request for an epilogue, Garrick replied, "Write you an epilogue! Give you a pinch of snuff!" And he composed one that delighted her very much. The work had success enough to encourage her in

producing a more original one, called "Percy," for the London world.

It was founded on an old French tale of Raoul de Coucy; but the catastrophe had so much likeness to that of Sir Eldred as to show very little power of invention, and by the adoption of English and Scotch names the playwright involved herself in inconsistencies that seem to have been regarded as mere trifles in those days.

Elwina, the daughter of Lord Raby, has been betrothed to Percy, but a quarrel between the retainers has led to the match being broken off, and to the lover going with the King to the Crusades. Oblivious of Chevy Chase, and apparently with no Border between them, Lord Raby then bestows the unwilling and sorrowful Elwina on Douglas. Strange to say, the tidings arrive, —

> "The King is safe and Palestine subdued;"

while of Percy it is reported, —

> "Beneath the walls of Solyma he fell."

On hearing which Elwina faints. Of course Percy is alive, returns, and has an interview with Elwina, in which each displays much virtue; but Percy refuses to restore a scarf which the

lady had given him in happier days. A letter entreating him to give it up falls into the hands of her husband, who, mad with jealousy, not only challenges Percy, but sends her a cup of poison to be taken in case of his own death. Inevitably this is reported to her, and she drinks the potion, but lives to hear that it was really Percy who was killed, just before her father had arrived on the scene to explain all; and while she dies, Douglas stabs himself! Her ravings were really touching, and must have been very effective; but neither Hannah nor her friends seem to have had the smallest scruple as to entertaining a Christian audience with suicide after the high Roman fashion, — as indeed the tragic stage was in those days a conventional world, quite apart from any relation to the facts of history, manners, or real life, and with a code as well as customs of its own.

Written under the superintendence of one who perfectly gauged the taste of the contemporary public, and who, though retired, had an unlimited power of patronage, "Percy" had every advantage, and the actress Kitty Clive observed that Garrick's nursing had "enabled the bantling to go alone in a month." It had, however, real merit, quite sufficient to support that enthusiasm which contemporaries are apt to feel for the

work of a female friend, — just as Scott did when he placed Joanna Baillie on a level with Shakspeare.

No drama of lady's manufacture has kept a permanent hold on the stage; but "Percy's" immediate success was triumphant. The authoress's home-letter begins, —

"I may now venture to tell you (as you extorted a promise from me to conceal nothing), what I would hardly have done last night, that the reception of 'Percy' exceeded my most sanguine wishes. I am just returning from the second night, and it was, if possible, received more favorably than on the first.

"One tear is worth a thousand hands, and I had the satisfaction to see even the men shed them in abundance. The critics (as is usual) met at the Bedford last night, to fix the character of the play. If I were a heroine of romance, and were writing to my confidante, I should tell you all the fine things that were told; but as I am a living Christian woman, I do not think it would be so modest. I will only say, as Garrick does, that I have had so much flattery that I might, if I would, choke myself in my own pap."

The house of Northumberland regarded the tragedy as a personal compliment, and Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore, and collector of the "Reliques," was deputed by the Duke to congratulate and thank her, and expressed his regret that the

gout had prevented both him and his son from being present. "They sent, however, each for a ticket, for which they paid, as became the blood of the Percys; and in so genteel and respectful a manner, that it was impossible for the nicest pride to take umbrage at it."

There must have been much reality and good acting, for when the letter was intercepted by the villain, a voice from the shilling gallery called out, "Pray send it to Mr.Percy!" Sally and Patty came up to enjoy the sight, and found that the authoress had just been presented with a wreath of Roman laurel, "the stems confined within an elegant ring." It came from Mrs. Boscawen, and was acknowledged in some fanciful verses, not without grace, though modern taste might smile at the frequent interposition of the hard-worked Apollo. Four thousand copies of the play were sold in a fortnight, and actually in the lifetime of Sheridan, almost in that of Goldsmith, Hannah was exalted as the best dramatic writer of the day.

Vers de société writing was one of the favorite amusements of the day, and Hannah and the clever Mrs. Barbauld vied in their composition. When Garrick gave Miss More the shoe-buckles he had worn at his last appearance on the stage, Mrs. Barbauld wrote, —

"Thy buckles, O Garrick, thy friend may now use,
But no one shall venture to tread in thy shoes."

After a visit to Dr. Lowth, Bishop of London, at Fulham Palace, Hannah wrote a ballad expressing the disgust of Bonner's ghost at the sight of the Protestant prelate's family in the precincts of his former abode. The quondam Bishop exclaims, —

But soft! what gracious form appears?
Is this a convent's life?
Atrocious sight! By all my fears,
A prelate with a wife!

Ah, sainted Mary! Not for this
Our pious labors joined,
The witcheries of domestic bliss
Had shook e'en Gardiner's mind.

Hence! all the sinful human ties,
Which mar the cloister's plan.
Hence! all the weak fond charities
Which make man feel for man.

But tortured memory vainly speaks
The projects we designed,
While this apostate Bishop seeks
The freedom of mankind.

And who shall change his wayward heart,
His wilful spirit turn?
For those his labors can't convert,
His weakness will not burn!

Mrs. Barbauld, from the Nonconformist point of view, wrote a rejoinder as an apology from the Bishops, beginning, —

Right Reverend Brother, and so forth,
The Bishops send you greeting;
They honor much the zeal and worth
In you so highly meeting.

But your abuse of us, good sir,
Is very little founded.
We blush that you should make a stir
With notions so ungrounded.

'T is not to us should be addrest
Your ghostly exhortation;
If heresy still lifts her crest,
The fault is in the nation.

The State, in spite of all our pains,
Has left us in the lurch;
The spirit of the times restrains
The spirit of the Church.

. . . . .

Well warned from what abroad occurs,
We keep all tight at home,
Nor brush one cobweb from St. Paul's
For fear we shake the dome.

Church maxims do not greatly vary,
Take it upon my honor;
Place on the throne another Mary,
We 'll find another Bonner!

Satire is certainly more diverting than compliment! It has been said that Hannah More's mind afterwards underwent a sudden change or conversion; but in point of fact, the sisters were always deeply and quietly religious women, and she held the even tenor of her way through all the enjoyments of society, and in the midst of all the whirl of success she was keeping up her habits of religious study. She writes from London,—

"I have read through all the Epistles three times since I have been here,—the ordinary translation, Locke's paraphrase, and a third put into very elegant English, I know not by whom, in which St. Paul's obscurities are elucidated, and Harwood's pomp of words avoided. I am also reading West on the Resurrection, in my poor judgment a most excellent thing."

The success of "Percy" encouraged the author to produce another tragedy, called "The Fatal Falsehood," founded on domestic troubles. Garrick prepared it for the stage; but before it appeared, he died quite suddenly on the 20th of January, 1779. His wife immediately entreated Miss More to come to her, as her most congenial friend and comforter; and truly her sympathy was most deep and full.

Garrick was buried in Westminster Abbey;

and Hannah, with another lady, had tickets from the Bishop of Rochester, Dean of Westminster, to witness the funeral, and after some difficulty obtained a place in a little gallery directly over the grave.

"Just at three the great doors burst open with a noise that shook the roof, the organ struck up, and the whole choir, in strains only less solemn than 'the Archangel's trump,' began Handel's fine anthem. The whole choir advanced to the grave in hoods and surplices, singing all the way; then Sheridan as chief mourner, then the body (alas! whose body?), with ten noblemen and gentlemen pall-bearers, then the rest of the friends and mourners. Hardly a dry eye; the very players, bred to the trade of counterfeiting, shed genuine tears."

More affecting still is the account of the widow's return to her own house.

"She bore it with great tranquillity, but what was my surprise to see her go alone into the chamber and bed in which he had died not a fortnight before. She had a delight in it beyond expression. I asked her the next day how she went through it. She told me, 'Very well;' that she first prayed with great composure, then went and kissed the dear bed, and got into it with a sad pleasure. When I expressed my surprise at her self-command, she answered: 'Groans and complaints are very well for those who are to

mourn but for a little while, but a sorrow that is to last for life will not be violent and romantic.'"

Sharing Mrs. Garrick's griefs in this manner, Miss More had not the heart even to go and witness the first performance of her "Fatal Falsehood," which was acted at the Adelphi in the spring, — so different was all from the unceasing witticisms and merriment which had passed between her and her friends when ushering "Percy" into the world.

"Hannah seems mightily indifferent," wrote Patty, who had come up to town on hearing that she was unwell.

Indeed, she could not bear to visit a theatre again, and never saw her own play, — though it had a very fair success, and compliments were showered on her. Her sister had the full pleasure of the applause, and sent home a story of a maid coming back with red eyes, and answering a remark on them with, "A great many respectable people cried too!"

Mrs. Boscawen sent five gentlemen with oaken sticks to applaud, but they did not find it necessary to lead the audience; there was universal clapping, and Miss Reynolds wrote: "I congratulate you, myself, and all my sex on the happy and most beautiful exhibition of your play last night."

And yet Hannah never again wrote for the stage; perhaps partly because, when preparing a second edition of "The Fatal Falsehood," Cadell told her she was too good a Christian for a dramatic author!

CHAPTER V.

LITERARY LIFE.

MRS. GARRICK clung so much to the friendship of Miss More, as to wish to keep her entirely as a resident in the country home at Hampton. Indeed, Hannah spent most of her time there during the two years from 1779 to 1781, writing letters and transacting business for the good lady, whose foreign education no doubt made this a difficulty to her. Boswell says that Mrs. Garrick was wont to call Miss More her domestic chaplain, probably because she watched over the religious welfare of the servants, as their mistress, being a Roman Catholic, could hardly do. The Roman Church was at that period in a very quiet, unaggressive state; and this may account for our never hearing of any of the controversies with, or attempts at influence from, Roman Catholic priests, that would certainly be met with by a person in her situation in the present day.

With Hampton as her headquarters, she kept up intercourse with her London friends,

and had sundry sparrings with Johnson. She says, —

"I never saw Johnson really angry with me but once; and his displeasure did him so much honor, that I loved him the better for it. I alluded, rather flippantly I fear, to some passage in 'Tom Jones.' He replied, 'I am shocked to hear you quote from so vicious a book. I am sorry to hear you have read it, — a confession which no modest lady should ever make. I scarcely know a more corrupt work.'

"I thanked him for his correction, assured him I thought full as ill of it now as he did, and had only read it at an age when I was more subject to be caught by the wit than able to discern the mischief. Of 'Joseph Andrews' I declared my decided abhorrence. He went so far as to refuse to Fielding the great talents which are ascribed to him, and broke out into a noble panegyric on his competitor, Richardson, who, he said, was as superior to him in talents as in virtue, and whom he pronounced to be the greatest genius that had shed its lustre on this path of literature."

Johnson came to enliven Hannah while she was sitting for her portrait to Miss Reynolds, and was induced to promise his autograph for Patty's collection, which was perhaps the first on record. He certainly did not treat her as he did a lady whom Hannah mentions, who begged him to look over a tragedy she had composed.

He told her she could discover the mistakes as well as he could.

"But, sir," said she, "I have no time! I have so many irons in the fire."

"Then, madam," growled the Doctor, "the best thing I can advise you to do is to put your tragedy in along with your irons."

The lady deserved a rebuff. Garrick having some time before refused a drama of hers, she had revenged herself by indicting a novel full of spiteful personalities against him. Miss More was requested to meet this by a criticism in the "Gentleman's Magazine." She did so effectively; but she found that the indulgence of sarcastic censure was so pleasant to her that she resolved never to make use of a weapon so dangerous to the employer.

Johnson had just been with George III., who begged him to place Edmund Spenser among his "Lives of the Poets," thereby showing more taste and knowledge than the booksellers, who had not accepted the author of "The Faery Queen" as a poet.

Hannah thus describes her life at Hampton in the early days of Mrs. Garrick's widowhood: —

"After breakfast I go to my own apartment for several hours, where I read, write, and work, very

seldom letting anybody in, though I have a room for separate visitors; but I almost look on a morning visit as an immorality. At four we dine. We have the same elegant table as usual, but I generally confine myself to one single dish of meat. I have taken to drink half a glass of wine. At six we have coffee. At eight, tea, when we have sometimes a dowager or two of quality. At ten we have salad and fruits. Each has her book, which we read without any restraint, as if we were alone, without apologies or speech-making."

Of Mrs. Garrick she says a little later,—

"Her garden and her family amuse her; but the idea of company is death to her. We never see a human face but each other's. Though in such deep retirement I am never dull, because I am not reduced to the fatigue of entertaining dunces, nor of being obliged to listen to them. We dress like a couple of scaramouches, dispute like a couple of Jesuits, eat like a couple of aldermen, walk like a couple of porters, and read as much as any two doctors of either University. I wish the fatal 20th were well over, I dread the anniversary of that day. On her wedding-day she went to the Abbey, where she stayed a good while; and she said she had been to spend the morning on her husband's grave, where for the future she should pass all her wedding-days. Yet she seems cheerful, and never indulges the least melancholy in company."

Hannah went out occasionally to spend a few days with friends in London. She met Dr. Burney and his daughter, and was one of those who thought of Fanny as that curious person wished to be regarded: "This Evelina is an extraordinary girl; she is not more than twenty, and of a very retired disposition."

At the end of the year of widowhood, Mrs. Garrick moved to her house at the Adelphi; and Hannah was admitted to good old Mrs. Delany's little select parties, never exceeding eight in number, where she met among others the brilliant Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and that clever *dilettante*, able satirist, and admirable correspondent, Horace Walpole, who formed a warm friendship for "Saint Hannah," as he was wont to term her.

This visit of 1780 ended by a journey to Oxford, where Dr. and Mrs. Kennicott welcomed her affectionately, and where she formed a friendship with Dr. Horne, President of Magdalen, afterwards the admirable Bishop of Norwich, and author of the most beautiful of English Commentaries on the Psalms. To his little daughter, Sally, Miss More gave a copy of "Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales," with a playful dedication in verse. Copies were much sought after, and so precious were they that

Mrs. Kennicott refused one to the Bishop of London (Lowth) whose comment on Isaiah is still a standard book. On his making a personal request for it, Hannah sent it, and was requited with an elegant compliment in Latin verse.

While at Oxford, Hannah mentioned as a favorite book, "L'Histoire de Messieurs de Port Royal," — the history of the Jansenist community, — so familiar to every one in these days. No one had ever heard of it except Dr. Horne, who admired it extremely. Two copies were sent for from Holland, where it was published; but it was out of print, and Miss More wrote to borrow, for the Kennicotts, Mrs. Boscawen's copy of what she calls "a book in which, it must be confessed, there is some Popish trumpery and a little mystical rubbish."

She must have been carefully educated in a dread of mysticism, for the dislike of it in a person with so strong a feeling for poetry was remarkable. She had a veritable instinct for poetry, which made her stand up against Johnson himself when he contemned "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," and "Lycidas." Neither of them, however, appreciated the sonnets, for it was to Hannah that Johnson made the well-known speech: "Milton, madam, was a genius

that could cut a colossus from a rock, but could not carve beads out of cherry-stones."

The quiet summer and autumn enabled Hannah to do a good deal of work, and when she rejoined Mrs. Garrick for the winter, she carried with her a set of "Sacred Dramas," — reminiscences perhaps of Metastasio, though they have far less action than have his Biblical plays. They were on the Finding of Moses, the Slaying of Goliath, Belshazzar's Feast, and a monologue of Hezekiah in his sickness.

Writers generally contrived to be at hand during the printing of their works, since the transmission of proofs by the post would have been too expensive; so she was in London at the critical moment. Bishop Porteus, then of Chester, called, and, she writes, —

"inquired very much when the book was to appear, — to my no small confusion, for the reason I am going to give. The book lay on Mrs. Boscawen's table, and we had just discovered a most ridiculous blunder; for by the misplacing of a single asterisk, the Bishop is made a painter and Sir Joshua Reynolds a bishop. Neither Mrs. B—— nor I had courage to mention this, so I very foolishly only said I could not tell when it would be published. I have sent the history of this blunder to Cadell, and with a dash of the pen it is tolerably rectified."

"After all, the kindest thing to my friends is *not* to send them a book; for a present from the author is very inconvenient, as I have often found to my cost, since it forces the person so distinguished to write against their conscience, and to praise what perhaps they secretly despise. Besides, as I have mentioned all my particular friends, it would be rather awkward, after offering the incense, to thrust the censer in their faces."

The book has gone through nineteen editions, though the author soon wrote, —

"The word *sacred* is a damper to the dramas. It is tying a millstone round the neck of sensibility, which will drown them both together. . . . Bishop Lowth has just finished the dramas, and sent me word that although I have paid him the most swinging compliment he ever received, he likes the book more than he can say. But the Bishop of Chester's compliment was the most solid; he said he thought that it would do a vast deal of *good*, and that is the praise best worth having. Well, I think I have said enough for myself now, as I could treat you with some more fine things from other quarters, and which I believe as little as those who utter them; so there is no harm done on my part at least, for I had neither the guilt of falsehood, nor the weakness of credulity."

No doubt these dramas did good. They were excellent Sunday reading when such liter-

ature was scarce; and thus the excellent Jonas Hanway (whose "Book of Nature" is really beautiful), after sitting down to it in fear and trembling lest undue liberties had been taken with Scripture, had no sooner finished than he carried three or four copies to a boarding-school for young ladies, and told the governess it was her duty to see that all the girls studied it thoroughly.

It would be of little use now; for the lack of Biblical research into Eastern manners and customs almost necessarily brings the scenery into the general conventional world, — such as is exemplified by an engraving of the period which is still to be seen in some old country houses, representing the finding of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter in the likeness of Queen Charlotte, with all her attendants arrayed fashionably in Court plumes, and little pyramids interspersed among the roofs of the city in the background. However, the dramas had the essential qualities of reverence and sound principles, and they added to the general esteem in which their author was held. Indeed, Mrs. Trimmer wrote that they excited in her much the same devotional sentiment as the Scriptures themselves.

With them appeared, in the form of a letter to Mrs. Boscawen, a poem on "Sensibility."

At that period of reaction from coarseness, sensibility was held to be the greatest charm a human creature could possess. This meant not the feeling which acts, but the feeling that weeps and shrinks. Rousseau had made natural impulse and tenderness appear the great motives of human life, and Goethe had followed this up in the passionate tale of the "Sorrows of Werther," which had appeared about eight years previously, and had been translated into every European language. The French, as we may see in the memoirs of the time, thought it needful to weep for a couple of days at every parting; and in England the fashion was to consider semi-starvation, agitated nerves, fainting fits, tears, fright, and helplessness, the token of delicate refinement. While spiders, toads, and earwigs sent ladies into hysterics, lap-dogs, birds, and the like were petted and lamented with exaggerated fervor. The "Pilgrim Good Intent," a clever imitation of the "Pilgrim's Progress," adapted to the days of false philosophy, shows in its travesty the Charity of the House Beautiful, personated by Sensibility weeping over a young ass, and in Hannah More's poem we find —

> "There are who for a dying fawn deplore,
> As if friend, parent, country were no more."

And again, —

"He scorning life's low duties to attend,
Writes odes on friendship while he cheats his friend."

With great good sense, Hannah proceeds to preach an excellent prose sermon on what true sensibility means, and how mere feeling —

"Is not a gift peculiar to the good,
'T is often but the virtue of the blood ;
And what would seem compassion's moral flow,
Is but a circulation swift or slow.
But to divert it to its proper course,
There wisdom's power appears, there reason's force.
If ill-directed, it pursue the wrong,
It adds new strength to what before was strong ;
But if religious bias rule the soul,
Then Sensibility exalts the whole."

This may not be exactly poetry, but it is very wholesome doctrine; and Bishop Lowth, among others, thought very highly of it.

Dr. Johnson was of the same mind. "He told me the other day," writes Hannah, "that he hated to hear people whine about metaphysical distresses when there was so much want and hunger in the world. I told him I supposed, then, he never wept at any tragedy but 'Jane Shore,' who had died for want of a loaf. He called me a saucy girl, but did not deny the inference."

Meeting him a day or two later at the Bishop of Chester's (Porteus), she was asked to sit next him and make him talk; and she writes, —

"You would have enjoyed seeing him take me by the hand and repeat with no small enthusiasm many passages from 'The Fair Penitent,' etc. I urged him to take a little wine. He replied: 'I can't drink a *little*, child, therefore I never touch it. Abstinence is easy to me; temperance would be difficult.' He was very good-humored and gay. One of the company happened to say a word about poetry. 'Hush, hush!' said he; 'it is dangerous to say a word of poetry before her; it is talking of the art of war before Hannibal.'"

Then followed a breakfast where Hannah had a discussion with that strange person, the Scotch Lord Monboddo, who complained that everything was degenerating,

"Men are not so tall as they were; women not so handsome. Nobody can write a long period." (What would he have said in the present day?)

Miss More said that though long periods were fine in oratory and declamation, such was not the language of passion; and she defended her opinion from the short outbursts of despair of Shakspeare's Constance, — "Gone to be married!" "Gone to swear a truce!" "False blood with false blood joined!" Then they

had an argument on the slave-trade, which he admired "on principle." However, Hannah drove him to confess that his principle meant that Plutarch had justified the like proceeding; and she had her revenge in a story she had just heard from a Dutch captain, a prisoner on parole, who had been taken by Commodore Johnson in that naval war against Holland which was an offshoot of the American War of Independence.

This Dutch captain had been dining on board another ship, when a storm came on which completely wrecked his own vessel, in which he had left his two little sons, four and five years old, under the care of a negro. There was one large boat, and all crowded into it. The black carefully placed the two children in a large bag, with a little pot of sweetmeats for them to eat, slung them across his shoulder, and put them into the boat. He was stepping into it himself when he was told there was no room, either the children or he must be left to their fate.

"Very well," he said; "give my duty to my master, and tell him I beg pardon for all my faults." With which he let himself sink.

Lord Monboddo fairly burst into tears at this noble story. Hannah was asked "by the greatest lady in this land" to make an elegy

of it; but she wisely observed, "It is above poetry."

The same letter tells how, when George Selwyn was beset by chimney-sweepers who insisted on forcing money from him, he exclaimed with a low bow, "Gentlemen, I have heard of the majesty of the people. I presume your highnesses are in Court mourning!"

The return from this sojourn in London was by way of Oxford, where, while staying at Christchurch with the Kennicotts, Hannah had the pleasure of being honored by Dr. Johnson, who took her over his own college, Pembroke, with great enjoyment. "This was my room, this Shenstone's." Then, after pointing out all the rooms of the poets who had been at his college, "In short," said he, "we were a nest of singing birds. Here we walked, here we played at cricket." The letter continues: —

"When we came into the common room we espied a fine large print of Johnson, framed and hung up that morning, with this motto: 'And is not Johnson in himself a host?' Under which stared you in the face: *From Miss More's Sensibility.* This little incident amused us; but alas! Johnson looks very ill indeed, spiritless and wan. However, he made an effort to be cheerful, and I exerted myself much to make him so."

He had, indeed, as he had written to Boswell,

been very unwell, and had come to Oxford for change of air, "struggling with so much infirmity of body, and such strong impressions of the fragility of life, that death, whenever it appears, fills me with melancholy."

The Doctor must have looked as he does in the fine portrait of him by Reynolds, that hangs in Pembroke College, a most pathetic and noble production, in the wonderful combination of the clumsy, massive form with the tokens of mighty intellect, and the lines of constant suffering. The bright-eyed merry little woman, who talked to him fearlessly, and at thirty-seven seemed a mere girl to the man of seventy-three, must have been a great relief to his spirits.

Great mirth went on with the Kennicotts. Each of the party had a nickname. Dr. Kennicott was the Elephant, his wife the Dromedary, her sister the Antelope, and Miss More the Rhinoceros. Soon after leaving them she wrote, as a parody on the lengthy notes appended at that time to each single line of text, —

DEAR DROMY, — Pray send word if Ante is come, and also how Ele does, to your very affectionate

RHINEY.

"Notes on the above epistle by a commentator of the latter end of the nineteenth century: —

"This epistle is all that has come down to us of this voluminous author, and is probably the only thing she ever wrote that was worth preserving, or which we might reasonably expect to reach posterity. Her name is only preserved to us in some beautiful hendecasyllables written by the best poet of his time."

Then follow, on each abbreviation, long and learned notes, full of references to learned authors, altogether very excellent fooling, showing what a clever and playful companion Hannah was. The "hendecasyllables" were Bishop Lowth's complimentary address.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BAS BLEU AND THE BAS BLANC.

MISS MORE had not long been at Hampton for her next annual visit to Mrs. Garrick before she heard of the death of her father in the January of 1783. It is a pity her biographers have so entirely left out all record of this good man. The only mention of him after his daughter's early childhood is when he sent her a copy of original verses long after he was eighty years old. We are not even told when he lost his wife, when he gave up his school, or whether he lived with his daughters; and the absence of all such references gives an air of indifference to family ties which Hannah could not have deserved, as is plain from the perfect affection subsisting between her and her sisters. He died quite suddenly; and Hannah did not return home, but for three weeks never went out of doors, even to walk round the garden, — though when in March Mrs. Garrick went to her house at the Adelphi, she seems to have gone out as usual.

Meeting Johnson, "our conversation ran very much on religious opinions, particularly those of the Roman Catholics. He took the part of the Jesuits, and I declared myself a Jansenist. He was very angry because I quoted Boileau's *bon mot* upon the Jesuits, that they had lengthened the Creed and shortened the Decalogue; but I continued sturdily to vindicate my old friends of Port Royal."

Johnson was much better at this time. He dined at Mrs. Garrick's, and there met, besides Hannah, Fanny Burney and Mrs. Elizabeth Carter. "Three such women," he afterwards said to Boswell, "are not to be found."

A notable acquaintance made at this time was with Sir William Jones, who was chiefly interesting to her as about to marry the daughter of the Bishop of St. Asaph, but of whom she pronounces, "He is a very amiable as well as learned man, and possesses more languages perhaps than any man in Europe."

It was at this time that Hannah was shocked by hearing "a dignified ecclesiastic propound in a charity sermon that the rich and great should be extremely liberal in their charities, because they were happily *exempted* from the *severer virtues*."

"What do you think Polycarp or Ignatius

would say to this?" she observes. "A visitor is just gone, quite chagrined that I am such a rigid Methodist that I cannot come to her assembly on Sunday, though she protests, with great piety, that she never has cards, and that it is quite savage in me to think there can be any harm in a little agreeable music."

Whether from religious scruples, or from her sentiment for Garrick's memory, Hannah would not go to the theatre to see Mrs. Siddons, or other contemporary celebrities. The future Egalité was cherishing his Anglo-mania. "But," she writes, "as I do not go to Ranelagh, nor the opera, nor sup at Charles Fox's, nor play at Brookes', nor bet at Newmarket, I have not seen that worthy branch of the House of Bourbon, the Duc de Chartres. I never heard of such a low, vulgar, vicious fellow. His character is

> Poltron sur mer,
> Escroc sur terre,
> Et vaurien partout!

Nothing shows more what Hannah, in spite of her lively playfulness, must have been than the fact that she was indispensable to her friends in time of sorrow. She had not long returned to Bristol before she was summoned to Oxford to aid Mrs. Kennicott in attending on her husband in a fatal illness at Christchurch. Indeed, Han-

nah was actually present during the last moments, having forced the wife from the room. Very touching is the next sentence in the letter announcing the event to the sisters. "The Dean of Christchurch has just been in to say that in a quarter of an hour the great bell is to toll. I have told her (the wife) of it, and she is now looking out a book for me to read during that time."

Thirty years of Dr. Kennicott's life had been spent in collating the Hebrew Bible, and he had only finished a year before his death. When he presented his work to the King, George III. asked him what on the whole had been the result of his laborious and learned investigations. His reply was that he had "found some grammatical errors, and many variations in the different texts, but not one which in the smallest degree affected any article of faith or practice."

After helping the widow in the preparations for her removal from her home at Christchurch, Hannah returned to Bristol. There she occupied herself with writing a poetical description of that delightful society over which Mrs. Vesey and Mrs. Montagu were in a manner the presidents. It had come to be known as the Bas Bleu, or Blue Stocking Club, because it was said Dr. Stillingfleet used to come to these parties in

blue ribbed hose; and as the *salon bleu* of the Hôtel Rambouillet had in some manner already associated the color with feminine learning, the name was not unwillingly adopted, though just as the *Précieuses* of the divine Arthénice became in time *ridicules*, so "Blue Stocking" arrived at being an opprobrious epithet. Hannah was rather hard on the French original salon, as she speaks of the conversation of her friends,—

> "Oh, how unlike the wit that fell,
> Rambouillet, at thy quaint hôtel,
> Where point and turn and equivoque
> Distorted every word they spoke!
> All so intolerably bright,
> Plain common-sense was put to flight;
> Each speaker so ingenious ever,
> 'T was tiresome to be so clever."

Whereas, at the parties under the patronage of Mrs. Montagu or Mrs. Vesey,—

> "Sober duchesses are seen,
> Chaste wits, and critics void of spleen;
> Physicians, fraught with real science,
> And Whigs and Tories in alliance;
> Poets, fulfilling Christian duties,
> Just lawyers, reasonable beauties;
> Bishops who preach, and peers who pay,
> And countesses who seldom play;
> Learned antiquaries, who from college
> Reject the rust and bring the knowledge;
> And hear it, Age, believe it, Youth,

Polemics really seeking truth!
And travellers of that rare tribe
Who 've seen the countries they describe!
Who studied there, so strange their plan,
Not plants, or herbs alone, but man;
While travellers of other notions
Scale mountain tops and traverse oceans,
As if, so much these themes engross,
The study of mankind was — moss;
Ladies who paint, nor think me partial,
An epigram as well as Martial,
Yet in all female worth succeed
As well as those that cannot read."

Hannah here betrays her entire lack of interest in natural science, antiquities, or scenery, as indeed she had no word for the architecture and special charms of Oxford. When shown round Strawberry Hill by Horace Walpole, she could only regret her want of interest in natural science or antiquarianism. The frequenters of the Bas Bleu were described, after the fashion of the time, under Latin names, and the satire was couched in the form of a letter to Mrs. Vesey.

To Mr. Pepys, who had there figured as Lælius, she writes, —

"I have been filling up the vacant hours of my convalescence in scribbling a parcel of idle verses, with which I hope to divert my dear Mrs. Vesey in her

banishment from London; but as I wish to puzzle her (and right easy is the task), I would not send them directly from here, as the post-mark would be a *coup de lumière*."

Half was therefore sent in a frank to Mr. Pepys, half in one to another friend. The two parts were to be put together, and the whole sent off to Mrs. Vesey without the smallest intimation whence it came. Mr. Pepys thoroughly entered into the spirit of the thing, said it was full of the best-humored wit and a most elegant compliment, and made his wife transcribe it that the handwriting might not betray the authorship.

How far the lady was mystified we are not told, probably very little, for in a week or two it was needful to forbid the giving away of copies; and when the authoress went to Hampton for her autumn visit and saw Dr. Johnson, she tells her sisters, —

"As to the 'Bas Bleu,' all the flattery I ever received from everybody together would not make up the sum. He said (but I seriously insist you do not tell anybody, for I am ashamed of writing it even to you) — he said there was no name in poetry that might not be glad to own it. You cannot imagine how I stared at this from Johnson, that parsimonious praiser. I told him that I was delighted at his approbation. He answered, quite

characteristically. 'And so you may, for I give you the opinion of a man who does not praise easily.' "

However, great men in their old age are easily biassed in favor of the doings of a person who has won their regard. Johnson's admiration was genuine, for he wrote at this time to Mrs. Thrale, —

"Miss More has written a poem called the 'Bas Bleu,' which in my opinion is a very great performance. It wanders about in manuscript, and surely will soon find its way to Bath."

On the whole, however, modern taste prefers the letter sent by Miss More at this time to Mrs. Pepys, with a pair of stockings knitted for one of the children, — a cleverer thing in its way than the "Bas Bleu."

THE "BAS BLANC."

DEAR MADAM, — I beg to dedicate the enclosed work, the fruit of a few days' leisure at St. Albans, to either of your little children of whose capacity of receiving it you will be the best judge upon trial; for there is a certain fitness without which the best works are of little value. Though it is so far of a moral cast that its chief end is utility, yet I hope that the child will be able to run through it with pleasure. I may say, without vanity, that it is founded upon the precepts of the great masters of the Epopæa, with but few exceptions. The

subject is simple, but it has a beginning, middle, and end. The exordium is the natural introduction by which you are let into the whole work. The middle, I trust, is free from any unnatural tumor or inflation, and the end from any disproportionate littleness. I have avoided bringing about the catastrophe too suddenly, as I know that would hurt him at whose feet I lay it. For the same reason, I took care to shun too pointed a conclusion, still reserving my greatest acuteness for this part of my subject. I had materials for a much longer work, but the art to stop has always appeared to me no less the great secret of a poet than the art to blot; and whoever peruses this work will see that I could not have added another line without such an unravelling as would have greatly perplexed the conclusion. My chief care has been to unite the two great essentials of composition,—ease and strength. I do not pretend to have paid any great attention to the passions, and yet I hope my work will not be found deficient either in warmth or softness; but these will be better felt than expressed. Now and then, partly from negligence and partly from temerity, I have broken the thread of my narration, but have pieced it so happily that none but the eye of a professor, which looks into the interior, will detect it; and the initiated are generally candid because they are in the secret. What little ornament there is I have bestowed, not injudiciously I trow, on the slenderest part. You will find but one episode, and even that does not obstruct the progress of the main subject; and for parallels, I will be bold to say

Plutarch does not furnish one so perfect. The rare felicity of this species of composition is the bold attempt to unite poetry with mechanics, for which see the clockwork in the third section. As all innovation is a proof of a false taste or a fantastic vanity, I was content to use the old machinery in working up the piece. I have taken care not to overlay the severe simplicity of the Ancients (my great precursors in this walk) with any finery of my own invention; and like other moderns, you will find I have failed only in proportion as I have neglected my model. After all, I wish the work may not be thought too long; but of this he to whose use it is dedicated will be the best judge. His feelings must determine, and that is a decision from which there lies no appeal; for in this case, as in most others, *le tact* is a surer standard than the rules. I beg your pardon for so tedious a preface to so slight a performance; but the subject has been near my heart as often as I have had the work in hand, and as I expect it will long survive all my other productions, I am desirous to place it in the Pepysian collection, humbly hoping that though neither defaced nor mutilated it may be found as useful as many a black-letter manuscript of more recondite learning.

I am, dear madam, etc.

L'Amie des Enfants.

The spring passed, as usual, in sojourns with Mrs. Garrick and Mrs. Kennicott, and in the society of the Bas Bleu ladies, Bishop Porteus,

Mr. Pepys, and Dr. Johnson, whose health was fast declining; but Hannah was constant to her regular habit of returning home in time for her sister's holiday, — when it was their great delight to spend the day, carrying their provisions with them, on the rocks at Clifton and King's Weston, then wild and secluded places, resting from what was sometimes one of their labors; namely, teaching their governesses to read and spell.

It was in the course of this summer that the sisters learned from their cook that the milk-woman, Anne Yearsley, who called for the kitchen refuse of their large household, was in great distress, and moreover was given to writing poetry. On investigation it turned out that the woman, in spite of great poverty and a large family, had read various poems, and written verses good enough to excite vehement enthusiasm in the ladies, who not only believed in her wonderful genius, but endowed her with all imaginable virtues; and indeed she does seem to have been a sober, patient, hard-working, religious woman while left to herself and unspoiled.

Hannah went to work, correcting and arranging Yearsley's poems for the press, and writing letters about "Lactilla" to all her friends, who became fired with the same enthusiasm, so that Mrs. Montagu wrote, —

"What force of imagination! What harmony of numbers! In Pagan times, one could have supposed Apollo had fallen in love with her rosy cheek, snatched her to the top of Mount Parnassus, given her a glass of his best Helicon, and ordered the nine Muses to attend her call!"

In thirteen months Hannah had written about a thousand letters on her behalf, and collected six hundred pounds for her, which was to be invested for her benefit. But notice and success had turned the poor woman's head, and with the suspicion that at that time often characterized the peasantry, she thought herself wronged by not having the whole sum placed in her hands, and even spread a report that Miss More was purchasing an estate for herself with it. Such was the general ignorance that it is extremely probable that she really thought so; and when the Duchess of Devonshire sent her a copy of Bell's British poets, and they were kept at Cowslip Green till shelves could be found to put them on, she wrote to the Duchess that they were detained from her. The proceeds of the subscription were put into the hands of a lawyer, then of a merchant, and finally Mrs. Yearsley set up a circulating library at the Hot Wells; so that she could not have been so utterly improvident and dissipated as was imagined in the

first pangs excited by her ingratitude. In fact, there was in those days much more ignorant distrust of the upper classes than there is at present; and likewise far less experience than there has since been, of the exceeding difficulty of fostering talent in the uneducated without exciting unreasonable expectations in excitable, unbalanced temperaments. "Had she turned out well," wrote Miss More, "I should have had my reward. I have my trial. Perhaps I was too elated at my success; and in counting over the money (almost two hundred pounds) might have thought, Is not this great Babylon which I have builded?"

In 1784 Hannah was again with her London friends, among whom she now numbered General Oglethorpe, the foster-brother of "The Old Chevalier," and said to have been the first reformer of prisons and the colonizer of Georgia; also Dr. Beattie, a Scottish minister, whose "Minstrel," in Spenserian stanzas, was much admired at the time.

The most valued of all Hannah More's friends was, however, passing away; namely, Johnson. She had been with him at St. Clement's at his last Communion in church, and grieved heartily for his loss, gathering up all the anecdotes about him, and the noble sayings with which, as with

a sledge-hammer, he bore down all that opposed truth or virtue. Still, it was weak of her to entreat Boswell to soften down some of Johnson's asperities in his memoirs, to which that prince of biographers replied, he "would not cut off his claws, nor make a tiger a cat, to please any one."

CHAPTER VII.

COWSLIP GREEN.

THE first of Hannah More's childish aspirations had been amply fulfilled by going to London to see bishops and booksellers. Her second desire — for a cottage too low for a clock — she and her sisters now ventured to gratify by the purchase of a low thatched house with a veranda, by name Cowslip Green, in a parish called Wrington, to the southeast of Bristol. She seems to have longed for absolute quiet and rest in the intervals of her periodical visits to London; and Wrington, in the midst of the fair pasture-lands around Bristol, was a delightful and peaceful spot. The fine old church might not be appreciated, but the clergyman was, for he was exceptionally good and zealous for the time, and glad to avail himself of the aid of such parishioners as the Misses More in the care of his flock. The cottage was the home of Hannah, with one companion; the holiday resort of the other sisters. After the first visit there, Mrs. Kennicott writes, —

"I am determined to be rammed, crammed, and jammed there next year, so I desire you will have no schemes that will interfere with my accompanying you from Oxford. I long to be twining honeysuckles, broiling chops, and talking sentiment with you, my dear friend Patty, and am an excellent gypsy cook; while Governess beholds with astonishment, and sister Betty is preparing for us in the house, with the vain expectation that we shall some time or other come into it and look like gentlefolks."

Meantime, the "Bas Bleu" was at length published, and, coupled with a poem called "Florio," dedicated to the Honorable Horace Walpole, describing the career of a young man of fashion. It has some felicitous couplets, and embalms some manners and customs.

Florio is only idle: —

> "'T was doing nothing was his curse:
> Is there a vice can plague us worse?
> He was not vicious, though
> Small habits, well pursued, betimes
> May reach the dignity of crimes.
> He talked fashionable slang,
> And many a standard phrase was his,
> Might rival *bore* or banish *quiz*."

Afterwards we hear of an excellent country squire who is capitally described: —

> "He dreaded nought like alteration,
> Improvement still was innovation.

He said, when any change was brewing,
Reform was a fine name for ruin;
This maxim firmly he would hold,
'That must be always good that 's old.'
The acts which dignify the day,
He thought portended its decay;
Nay, fear'd 't would show a falling State,
If Sternhold should give way to Tate.
The Church's ruin he predicted,
Were modern times not interdicted;
He scorn'd them all, but crown'd with palm
The man who set the Hundredth Psalm."

(Miss More does not seem to be aware how justly he might do so.)

When Florio comes down to stay with this worthy Tory, —

"Six bays, unconscious of their weight,
Soon lodged him at Sir Gilbert's gate;
His trusty Swiss, who flew still faster,
Announced th' arrival of their master."

In reply to the hospitable greeting, —

"Florio uttered
Half sentences, or rather muttered
Disjointed words, as 'honor,' 'pleasure!'
'Kind,' 'vastly good, ma'am!' 'beyond measure!'
Tame expletives, with which dull fashion
Fills vacancies of sense and passion."

He finds the country very dull, and tries in vain the library: —

"This book was dull and that was wise,
And this was monstrous as to size."

He turns over —

> "Whate'er look'd small, whate'er looked new,
> Half-bound, or stitched in pink or blue;"

and finally —

> "He lays the book upon the shelf,
> And leaves the day to spend itself."

However, he falls in love with Sir Gilbert's daughter, gets disgusted with his former life, and returns to Celia, when —

> "Such was the charm her sweetness gave,
> He thought her Wedgewood had been Sève," —

Sévres, we suppose. And finally he is cured:

> "Reviews with scorn his former life,
> And for his rescue, thanks his wife."

The publication was much admired. Mrs. Boscawen, at a dinner-party, heard "a chorus of panegyric. . . . Lady Mount Edgcumbe repeats line after line with so much rapture it would do you good to hear her."

When the authoress went, as usual, to town in 1786, for her annual stay, Horace Walpole said "a thousand diverting things about 'Florio,'" and accused her of "having imposed on the world by a dedication full of falsehood." He was full of interest about the recent discovery of the Paston letters, but Hannah thought "they

would be of no great literary merit, . . . and as for me, I have no great appetite for anything as merely being curious, unless it has other merits;" and when she gets the letters, she patriotically declares, "they have none of the elegance of Rowley" (that is, Chatterton).

Here is a story picked up during this visit: Sir Joseph Yorke met the Duke of Chartres (*Égalité*) at the house of the Prince of Orange, during the American War. The Duke thought proper to ridicule the English ambassador, and being unable to extract a laugh, said, "What, sir, do you never laugh?"

"Seldom, Monseigneur," said Sir Joseph.

"But, sir, if our fleet should attack England?"

"Alors, Monseigneur, je rirois," was the quiet reply.

The great slavery question was beginning to occupy Hannah's mind. She was already a friend of Lady Middleton, who had first inspired William Wilberforce with the idea of his great work in life; and on going to make her annual visit to Mrs. Garrick in the winter of 1787, she first heard of the bill that was to be brought into Parliament for its abolition.

Her mind was deeply stirred; and the interest she took in the matter led her into intimacies of a more decidedly religious class than her

former friends belonged to, — those in fact who had been strongly affected by the Wesleyan leaven without joining the Methodist body, and thus may be considered as the earliest of the Evangelical School.

Besides Mr. Wilberforce himself, then aged twenty-eight, and in the full vigor of the mental powers so far surpassing his bodily strength, she also added to her list of intimate friends the Reverend John Newton. This remarkable man, now chiefly remembered as the correspondent of the poet Cowper, had been in early youth a sailor, and even captain of a slave-ship. After several remarkable escapes, he had become devotedly religious, and had taken holy orders. As curate of Olney, he had made a deep impression on Cowper's mind, probably over-exciting that morbid temperament; and his rebukes to the wickedness of the place, in especial an endeavor to prevent the orgies of the 5th of November, had led to a riot with violence that for his wife's sake made him leave Olney. Mr. Thornton, Wilberforce's brother-in-law, had given him the living of St. Mary Woolnoth; and there Hannah More made acquaintance with him, and commenced a lasting friendship and correspondence.

Under this influence, Cowper was writing indignant and pathetic verses upon slavery; and

Miss More did her part in a poem, which certainly was not without effect.

There is something absolutely fine in the outburst, —

"And thou, White Savage, whether lust of gold,
Or lust of conquest rule thee uncontroll'd;
Hero or robber! by whatever name,
Thou plead thy impious claim to wealth as fame, —

"In reason's eye, in wisdom's fair account,
Your sum of glory boasts a like amount.
The means may differ, but the end's the same;
Conquest is pillage with a nobler name.
Who makes the sum of human blessings less,
Or sinks the stock of general happiness,

"Though erring fame may grace, though false renown
His life may blazon or his memory crown,
Yet the last Audit shall reverse the cause,
And God shall vindicate his broken laws."

The influences which had freshly come into Miss More's life, and the yearnings for higher things that had always been hers, led her to devote her talent to something more serious than the playful and complimentary, or even ironical, verses which had hitherto been her forte.

Living as she did for half the year among the most select and superior though not perhaps the most fashionable society in London, and numbering among her acquaintances and friends

many persons of high rank, she necessarily saw a great deal of the habits of the upper classes, and of their effects on others. Much that passed before her eyes was painful to her better judgment; and though sometimes she spoke out, she felt that her silence tolerated many customs that she disapproved, and that her conscience would not allow her to sanction.

She therefore devoted herself to writing a book, called "Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great to General Society." George the Third had just put forth a Royal Proclamation against Vice and Immorality, and this gave her a good opportunity for publishing her thoughts anonymously.

The treatise was well thought out, and the well-balanced sentences put to shame the careless slip-slop of our own day. "The Sunday Woman," true to herself, begins with explaining that her object is to dwell "on the less obvious offences that are in general safe from the bar, the pulpit, or the throne, yet which do much harm to inferiors." She protests against ladies sending for their hair-dressers on Sunday, — as no doubt they did when the elaborate fabrics worn at parties had to be built up by a master hand, and the least wealthy and distinguished dames had to be attended first of all, and to sit

encamped in a circle of chairs, with a sheet overhead to keep off the dust, sometimes for thirty-six or twenty-four hours before their public appearance.

Another protest is against "card money," then a perquisite of the servants, whom the guests were expected to fee for furnishing the cards.

"If the advantage of the dependant is to increase in a direct ratio with the dissipation of his employer, what encouragement is left for valuable servants, or what prospect remains of securing valuable servants for sober-minded families?"

The denial at the door in the form of "Not at home" was already in vogue, and the argument is unanswerable as to the harm to the servant.

"To hope that he will always lie for your convenience and not for his own, is perhaps expecting more from human nature in a low and unformed state than we have any right to expect. Nor should the master look for undeviating and perfect rectitude from his servant, in whom the principle of veracity is daily and hourly being weakened in conformity with his own command."

She may have written this the more strongly because Mr. Wilberforce himself, when dismissing a servant for deceit, had been told by the

man that "Not at home!" had been his first lesson in the unimportance of truth, coming as it did from so religious a person as his master.

The book made a great sensation. The second edition went off in six days, and the third was sold out in four hours. By many it was attributed to Wilberforce, by others to the Bishop of London (Porteus). The Bishop of Salisbury (Horsley), when Miss More and Mrs. Trimmer were calling at his house, observed that he was between two very singular women, one of whom had undertaken to reform all the poor, and the other all the great; but he congratulated Mrs. Trimmer upon having the most hopeful subjects. An anonymous epigram was sent to Hannah, —

"Of sense and religion in this little book
All agree there 's a wonderful store;
But while everywhere for an author they look,
I only am wishing for More."

The scene with Horace Walpole is worth describing: —

"He said not a word of the little sly book, but took me to task in general terms for having exhibited such monstrously severe doctrines. I knew he alluded to the 'Manners of the Great;' but we pretended not to understand each other, and it was a most ridiculous

conversation. He defended (and that was the joke) religion against me, and said he would do so against the whole Bench of Bishops, — that the Fourth Commandment was the most amiable and merciful law that ever was promulgated, as it entirely considers the ease and comfort of the hard-laboring poor, and beasts of burden; but that it was never intended for persons of fashion, who have no occasion to rest, as they never do anything on the other days, — and indeed, at the time the law was made there were no people of fashion. He really pretended to be in earnest, and we parted mutually unconverted, — he lamenting that I had fallen into the heresy of *puritanical* strictness, and I lamenting that he is a person of fashion for whom the Ten Commandments were not made."

Another of Hannah's *jeux d'esprit* must be given, — a letter supposed to be written in the next century, when French idioms should have invaded the English language. What is amusing is that it is so prophetic that we believe many young readers will accept several of the constructions as natural, while, on the other hand, French itself has become much less idiomatic: —

ALAMODE CASTLE, June 20, 1840.

DEAR MADAM, — I no sooner found myself here than I visited my new apartment, which is composed of five pieces; the small room which gives upon the garden is

practised through the great one, and there is no other issue. As I was quite exceeded with fatigue, I had no sooner made my toilette than I let myself fall on a bed of repose, when sleep came to surprise me.

My Lord and I are in the intention to make good cheer and a great expense; and the country is in possession to furnish wherewithal to amuse oneself. All that England has of illustrious, all that youth has of amiable, as beauty of ravishing, sees itself in this quarter. Render yourself here then, my friend, and you shall find assembled all that there is of best, — whether for letters, whether for birth.

Yesterday I did my possible to give to eat, — the dinner was of the last perfection, the wines left nothing to desire. The repast was seasoned with a thousand rejoicing sallies, full of salt and agreement, and one more brilliant than another. Lady Frances charmed me as for the first time. She is made to paint, has a great air, and has infinity of expression in her physiognomy; her manners have as much of natural as her figure has of interesting.

I had prayed Lady B—— to be of this dinner, as I had heard nothing but good of her; but I am now disabused on her subject. She is past her first youth, has very little instruction, is inconsequent, and subject to caution; but having evaded with one of her pretenders, her reputation has been committed by the bad faith of a friend, on whose fidelity she reposed herself. She is therefore fallen into devotion, goes no more to spectacles, and play is defended at her house. Though

she affects a mortal serious, I observed that her eyes were of intelligence with those of Sir James, near whom I had taken care to plant myself, — though this is a sacrifice which costs. Sir James is a great sayer of nothings; it is a spoiled mind, full of fatuity and pretension. His conversation is a tissue of impertinences, and the bad tone which reigns at present has put the last hand to his defects. He makes but little case of his words, but as he lends himself to whatever is proposed of amusing, the women throw themselves at his head. — Adieu.

Any one who is familiar with the writings of Madame de Genlis will see that this reads like an almost literal translation from one of her letters.

Hannah was in London in 1789, when George III. went to St. Paul's to return thanks for his recovery; but she could only see the procession, for, in spite of the proclamation, it was impossible to reach a church.

"I could have got to the planet Jupiter as easily as to a church. . . . I was on Saturday at a very great dinner at Lord Somers's, and could find out the party principles of each one of the company only by his saying how the King looked, and what degree of attention he gave the sermon. I was very sorry I could not go, as invited, to Lady Cremorne's, to see *her* way of celebrating the festivity. She had two

hundred Sunday-school children, thirty-six of whom she clothed for the occasion. They walked in procession to the church; after service they walked back to the house, where, after singing a Psalm of Praise and 'God Save the King,' they had a fine dinner of roast beef and plum pudding. Then the whole two hundred marched off with baskets under their arms, full of good things for their parents."

CHAPTER VIII.

CHEDDAR.

WE are come to the great and distinctive work of Hannah More's life. The undertaking was facilitated by the fact that at the end of thirty-two years' diligence, the sisters had realized a sufficient competence to venture on resigning their school to their assistant, Miss Mills. They had built for themselves a house in Pulteney Street, Bath, which they intended to serve as their winter home, the summers being passed with Hannah at Cowslip Green. Bishop Horne wrote this appropriate congratulation, —

"May they have raised up a succession of *daughters* who may prove hereafter firm in principle as corner-stones to support the honor of their respective families, and in accomplishments *polished after the similitude of a palace!*"

Hannah, at forty-four years old, was becoming somewhat weary of London talk; was yearning for something deeper and calmer, and was only held to her old habits by her friendships with

Mrs. Garrick and the other ladies whom she had learned to love. She meant to spend more time in the country, in study and literary labor, while at the same time she and Patty attended to the various needs of the poor at Wrington, their own parish.

However, a new task was set before her. Mr. Wilberforce, who usually spent part of the Parliamentary recess at Bath for the sake of his health, came, on the eve of his thirtieth birthday, to make a short stay with his sister at Cowslip Green. The ladies there talked to him about the beauties of the Cheddar cliffs and caves, about ten miles distant. He drove over thither in his chaise, intending to spend the day in roaming about, lunching on the provisions sent by his hostesses, and enjoying alternately his book and the scenery.

To the surprise and dismay of the good sisters, he scarcely spoke when he came back, but at once shut himself up in his room, and they found their cold chicken and wine untasted in the carriage. They feared that he was unwell; but he came down to supper (at what, a century later, is dinner-time), and as soon as the servant had left the room, he exclaimed, —

"Miss Hannah More, something must be done for Cheddar!"

On those beautiful rocks the solitary visitor had been beset at every step by a miserable population, begging so pertinaciously that the quiet enjoyment that he had hoped for was impossible; but instead of impatience or vexation, he had talked to the people, given them something, — for which, he said, "they were grateful beyond measure," — and had discovered that their poverty was frightful, and their spiritual destitution still greater. The vicar of Cheddar was non-resident; and his curate lived at Wells, twelve miles off, only riding over to the place for a Sunday service, supplemented on occasion by baptisms, weddings, or funerals, — while absolutely no religious or secular instruction, and no charities at all were provided for.

The same state of affairs seemed to prevail throughout the Mendip Hills, — the ridge of limestone, rich in minerals, extending from Wells to the Bristol Channel. They had always been inhabited by miners and colliers, naturally a rough population. The great Abbeys of Wells and Glastonbury had sent missions among them, and churches had been built, some remarkably fine; but the people seem always to have been lawless, and at war with the bishops and abbots, and after the suppression of the monasteries absolutely nothing seems to have been done.

The livings were poor vicarages, held by pluralists who never dreamed of residence in so savage a district, but left curates to undertake as many charges as it was possible to combine in a single Sunday. Things had come to such a pass that no decent person could walk on the cliffs at Cheddar without being assaulted; no constable durst execute a warrant at Shipham, lest he should be hurled down some yawning pit; and at Blagdon the magistrate, who was also the curate, hardly sat down to dinner without being called away to hear of some act of violence.

Such were the descriptions that the quiet sisterhood at Cowslip Green gave the young member of Parliament, who in those hours of retirement had been praying for the wretched beings that he had seen at Cheddar. To begin what we should call in these days a "mission" was the only thing to be done; but missions had not then been invented, and the clergy were worse than useless in the matter. There was nobody to depend on but the ladies themselves; and at last, when Hannah and Patty had volunteered, Mr. Wilberforce said: "If you will be at the trouble, I will be at the expense."

Be it remembered that though Mr. Raikes had begun Sunday-schools at Gloucester, and Mrs. Trimmer was in the forefront of the work

at Brentford, they both had a comparatively civilized race to deal with, and Mrs. Trimmer had the farther advantage of her husband being a large employer of labor; whereas the work these ladies — both in frail health — undertook was ten miles from their home, where they were utterly unknown, and in one of the wildest districts in England, whose inhabitants were a terror to the neighborhood.

Well might Mr. Wilberforce compare these two brave ladies to Spenser's "Britomart," — all unknowing that they were wont among themselves to term him "the Red Cross Knight." In addition to moral difficulties, the state of the roads — or no roads — was dreadful when, in the end of September, 1789, five or six weeks after the consultation at Cowslip Green, Hannah and Patty started on a reconnoitring expedition in a chaise. Patty kept a journal which has since been published under the title of "Mendip Annals." At a place called Cross they halted to make inquiries from a rabbit-catcher how the land lay. He was a Quaker, and a pious man; and his eyes filled with tears of joy at the hope that something was to be done for Cheddar. "You will have much difficulty," he said; "but let not the enemy tempt you to go back, and God bless the work!"

He told them nothing could be done without the concurrence of a rich farmer ten miles beyond; so on they plodded through shocking roads to his house, arriving half starved. He was hospitable enough as to food; but when they unfolded their business he was very much shocked, declaring that religion would be the ruin of agriculture, and had done nothing but mischief ever since it had been brought in by the monks at Glastonbury. They had to change the subject. As Hannah wrote, —

"Miss Wilberforce would have been shocked could she have seen the petty tyrants whose insolence we stroked and tamed, the ugly children we fondled, the pointers and spaniels we caressed, the cider we commended, and the wine we swallowed."

This put the farmer in good humor; and he was further mollified on finding that no subscription was asked, assuring these strange visitors that it was a pity that they should take the trouble, since the Cheddar people were extremely well off, there being a large legacy to be given in time of distress, — though to be sure they had not received any for the last seven-and-thirty years, it having been thrown into Chancery on a dispute of the two churchwardens; but now he believed it might soon be settled, as he was appointed a trustee!

Feeling that they had gained some ground, the two ladies returned to their inn at Cross, and drove to Cheddar before eight the next morning to begin their canvass. They made about eleven or twelve calls, generally being offered brandy and water, and finding the most intelligent persons of opinion that it might be well to have the children shut up in school, as there was a deal of robbery of orchards. They gave a fearful account of the poor (as is the wont of the farmer); but even among themselves, Martha says, "there is as much knowledge of Christ as in the wilds of Africa."

Hannah wrote to Mr. Wilberforce an account of her work from the George Inn, Cheddar, a mere public-house. She proceeds, —

"If effect be the best proof of eloquence, then mine was a good speech; for I gained at length the hearty concurrence of the whole people, and their promise to discourage or favor the poor in proportion as they were attentive or negligent in sending their children. Patty, who is with me, says she has good hope that the hearts of some of these rich poor wretches may be touched. They are as ignorant as the beasts that perish, intoxicated every day before dinner, and plunged in such vice that I begin to think London a virtuous place. By their assistance I procured immediately a good house, which, when a partition is taken down

and a window added, will receive a great number of children. The house, and an excellent garden of almost an acre of ground, I have taken at once for six guineas and a half per year. I have ventured to take it for seven years. There 's courage for you ! It is to be put in order immediately, 'for the night cometh;' and it is a comfort to think that though I may be dust and ashes in a few weeks, yet by that time the business will be in actual motion. I have written to different manufacturing towns for a mistress, but can get nothing hitherto. As for the mistress of the Sunday-school and the religious part, I have employed Mrs. Easterbrook, of whose judgment I have a good opinion. I hope Miss Wilberforce will not be frightened, but I am afraid she must be called a Methodist.

"I asked the farmers if they had no resident curate. They told me they had a right to insist on one, which right, they confessed, they had never ventured to exercise for fear their tithes should be raised. I blushed for my species. The Glebe House is good for any purpose. The vicarage of Cheddar is in the gift of the Dean of Wells, the value nearly £50 per annum; the incumbent, a Mr. R———, who has something to do — I cannot here find out what — in the University of Oxford, where he resides. The curate lives at Wells, twelve miles distant. They have only service once a week, and there is hardly an instance of a poor person being visited or prayed with. The living of Axbridge belongs to the Prebendary of Winchscombe in the Cathedral of Wells; the annual value is about

£50. . . . Mr. G—— is intoxicated about six times a week, and very frequently is prevented from preaching by two black eyes, honestly earned by fighting."

The reason of writing to a manufacturing town was that the school was, as far as possible, to be made self-supporting by setting the girls to spin flax and wool for the numerous factories of Gloucestershire and Somersetshire. Mrs. Trimmer had established this plan; and the good Ladies Bountiful had declared that thus work could never be wanting, since spinning could never go out of fashion. The difficulty of getting clothes was immense among the poor in those days. At Brentford, close to London, the most thrifty parents dressed their children in rags bought by the pound and patched together, and brushes and combs were utterly unknown; so what must the average child of the Mendips have been? Spinning and knitting would, it was hoped, be a step to enabling the girls to clothe themselves decently.

A spinning mistress was secured; and likewise an excellent widow who had seen better days, and had forty pounds a year of her own, — Mrs. Baker, with her daughter, — who were to conduct the school in the cottage that had been hired. When all was ready the two sisters, with their mistresses, took rooms at the "George" at

Cheddar, and proceeded thither on Saturday, the 24th of October, taking a leg of mutton as their provision, and finding no room but the kitchen to sit in.

On Sunday, the 25th of October, one hundred and forty children assembled at the school; and the little mission party took them to church, which they found more crowded than it had been for forty years, except on a club day. The curate preached for twelve minutes on the laws of the land and the divine right of kings; but the divine right of the King of kings seemed to be a law above his comprehension. The farmers looked on in armed neutrality, with the prevailing sentiment that reading never did good to any one, and that religion would be the ruin of agriculture. The school was opened on the Monday, when there was a display of utter ignorance.

But when, five weeks later, Patty went to inspect proceedings before the removal to Bath for the winter, she found thirty children perfect in the Catechism, forty able to say three Psalms, and a few elder ones showing some knowledge of the Bible, the village altogether in a more decent state, the church gradually filling, and not a child on the cliffs on Sunday.

On Sunday evenings, the parents of the chil-

dren were induced to come for an hour of instruction in the very foundations of religion. This was not attempted without much consideration; but the rector, on making his annual visit to receive his tithes, approved all that was done, gave half a guinea among the children, and left this encouragement.

Yet these exertions of the two sisters were made while "poor Patty had a wretched summer, in almost constant pain" from rheumatism in the head, and Hannah was often disabled by the same complaint. They had "ferreted about" in others of the neglected parishes during these autumn months, and had further designs for some of the "thirteen without even a resident curate;" but winter made the Mendips inaccessible, and Cowslip Green was but a "thin-walled cottage," so that the whole sisterhood migrated to their new house at Bath, whence Hannah wrote to Mr. Wilberforce to beg for a supply of New Testaments, Prayer-books, and a few hymn-books.

After recruiting herself with the waters at Bath, Hannah proceeded to pay her yearly visit to London, where anecdotes of the revolutionary doings in France were current.

Once a lady was astonished by her maid walking into her room with a pamphlet in her hand,

and sitting down to read it, explaining, "C'est que nous allons tous devenir égaux, et je me prépare pour l'égalité." Also, when a duel was expected, so many spectators went to it that *il y avait trente whiskeys remplis de dames.*

The Duke of Grafton had put forth a pamphlet of a latitudinarian character entitled, "Hints to an Association for preventing Vice and Immorality," and this called forth an answer from Miss More, by name, "An Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World."

Judging by this reply, there must have been a great deal in His Grace's paper like complaints we are familiar with. It affirmed and asserted that people absented themselves from church from objections to the Liturgy; and Miss More replies, in a spirit of evident affection to the Prayer-book: "If we do not find a suitable humiliation in the Confession, a becoming earnestness in the Petitions, a congenial joy in the Adoration, a corresponding gratitude in the Thanksgivings, it is because our hearts do not accompany our words!" Moreover, she demonstrates that conscientious objections to the Litany or the Athanasian Creed could hardly be the real cause of absence from church, since there were all the Sunday afternoons free from

either, and eight-and-forty Sunday mornings without the *Quicumque*.

The Duke seems to have declared that religion was in a highly flourishing state; and he is answered by references to the Elizabethan and early Stuart days, when statesmen were far more openly zealous in piety. Miss More accepts, however, his praise of the period as "the Age of Benevolence," but argues most soundly that lavish gifts are of no avail without efforts at reforming the vices that cause poverty and misery; and then she plunges into a subject she afterwards pursued more fully,— that of religious education, — ending with drawing a beautiful picture of a true Christian life.

So much did it delight Bishop Porteus, that in allusion to Sir Thomas More's exclamation, "Aut Erasmus aut Diabolus!" he wrote, "Aut Morus aut Angelus!"

Just after her return to Somersetshire, Miss More was greatly shocked. On a Sunday, in the midst of morning service, the congregations in the Bristol churches were startled by the bell and voice of the crier, proclaiming the reward of a guinea for a poor negro girl who had run away. "To my great grief and indignation," Hannah wrote to Horace Walpole, "the poor trembling wretch was dragged out from a hole

at the top of a house where she had hid herself, and forced on board ship. Alas! I did not know it till too late, or I would have run the risk of buying her, and made you and the rest of my humane — I had almost said human — friends help me out, if the cost had been considerable."

CHAPTER IX.

THE MENDIP MINING DISTRICTS.

ON her return from London, Hannah found Cheddar in a satisfactory state: Mrs. Baker had proved herself equal to managing the school all the winter, as well as to conducting what would now be called a Bible class for the elders, which had received clerical sanction, and was doing great good.

This encouraged the two sisters so much that they ventured to take in hand Shipham and Rowborrow, — two neighboring villages on the top of the Mendips, whose inhabitants were even more savage and deplorable than those of Cheddar, brutal in manners, and so ferocious that they were almost beyond the law, since any one who durst arrest an inhabitant was sure before long to disappear. It was a hundred years since the vicarage had been inhabited; and the actual incumbent, who was ninety-four years of age, had held the living for fifty of them, but had never preached a sermon there for forty. There was a worthy curate, but so

poor that he was held in contempt by the rude flock.

Hannah applied for a lease of the vicarage, and obtained it; also that the place should be put in repair at the vicar's expense.

To find teachers was the next great difficulty. Her plan was to have a mistress to teach the poorest reading and work, together with a master for the Sunday-school and for the farmers' children. But no one was trained; and the only chance was to get persons of the small amount of education required, with devout spirits and some power of discipline, and form them to the work. Happily, when "teaching their own governesses" the Misses More had acquired some experience of this unusual and needful kind; and Mrs. Baker, of Cheddar, seems, like Mary More herself, to have been one of the women formed by nature for school government.

There was reported to exist a young woman, daughter to a farmer, and busied with the hard toil of a dairy in a cheese-making country, who had nevertheless formed a little Sunday-school of thirty children, buying them books and gingerbread, as rewards, out of her own small pittance. Hannah and Patty mounted their horses and went off to see her. They found her able to read and write fairly well, religious, good,

and zealous, and with a fair knowledge of Scripture. This was all that could be hoped for in a village schoolmistress; and as she spoke warmly of her half-sister, who was at service some miles off, the two, Patience Seward and Flower Waite, were engaged as mistresses of a girls' school in the old vicarage for Rowborrow and Shipham, and readily imbibed instruction in the Misses Mores' system and manner of teaching. Two men were also found to teach the boys.

Congresbury was next taken in hand. Of this, apparently, Hannah writes, —

"This hot weather makes me suffer terribly; yet I have now and then a good day, and on Sunday was enabled to open the school. It was an affecting sight. Several of the grown-up youths had been tried at the last assizes; three were the children of a person lately condemned to be hanged; many thieves, — all ignorant, profane, and vicious beyond belief. Of this banditti we have enlisted one hundred and seventy; and when the clergyman, a hard man, who is also the magistrate, saw these creatures kneeling round us, whom he had seldom seen but to commit or punish in some way, he burst into tears. I can do them little good, I fear, but the grace of God can do all. . . . Have you never found your mind, when it has been weak, now and then touched and raised by some little incident? Some musical gentlemen, drawn from a distance by curiosity, just as I was coming out of church with

my ragged regiment, much depressed to think how little good I could do them, quite unexpectedly struck up that beautiful and animating anthem, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me.'"

Then followed Yatton, where the curate was hearty in his assistance; and "that phenomenon, a pious farmer," brought them seven fine boys, all able to say the Catechism. There were three more at home; but before many months were over, the mother died. And on the ladies' next visit, they met the father at church carrying a young infant, and followed by all the other ten.

Cheddar had reached a second stage,—though the spinning plan did not flourish, in spite of three sorts having been tried, and Miss More having gone herself to almost every clothing town in the county. Knitting was preferred, for the supply of the stocking-dealers at Axbridge. Wages being only six shillings a week, a women's clothing club at three half-pence per week was found an immense benefit. There was an annual feast at the distribution of the garments bought by the subscriptions, a service, a sermon, and a tea, when a kind of journal of the past year was read, mentioning attendance at church, and whether there was

less or more fraud, bad language, scolding, or Sabbath-breaking. The club served further for a sick fund; and when a girl of good character married, she received from it five shillings, a pair of white stockings, and a Bible.

The same plan was carried out in each of the other places as they became ripe for it; and more became added to the list. This year, 1790, was the first for twenty-four that Hannah did not make her usual sojourn in London, being too much engrossed with her work to go farther than Bath. Even when not visiting the schools, she had enough to do in writing text-books for them, and in trying to train the teachers, sometimes successfully, sometimes in vain, — for some turned out slack and hopelessly inefficient, while the misguided zeal of others was to cause her much trouble.

Good Mrs. Baker was a tower of strength; and Cheddar became a sort of normal school. Also, the old vicar of Shipham died, and his successor, Mr. Jones, was no absentee, but a hearty and zealous worker.

Axbridge was the next place attempted. It was a small stocking-making town, with a corporation very poor, yet so luxurious as never to admit a plain joint of meat at its civic banquets. The fighting vicar, however, was civil to the

ladies, and sanctioned their labors. Nor did the corporation reject them; so that they were able to begin with a hundred poor little dirty, half-starved creatures. A new and promising curate, Mr. Boake, was appointed to Cheddar, and began the custom of catechising the children in church; but he lived in Axbridge, — so little was the need of residence understood.

A still more arduous undertaking lay before the undaunted Britomart and Belphœbe. Nailsea then lay in the midst of a thicket, and had a glass factory, as well as collieries which attracted many of the worst characters in the country; but like the publicans and sinners of old they proved the most amenable, and especially eager to secure a place for the schools. A Mr. and Mrs. Young were found for the school, and the experiences here were quite unlike those of the other places.

"The colliers are abundantly more human than the people of the glass-houses. The work there is irregular; and the furnaces cannot be allowed to cool, so that the Sunday brings no rest. The wages are high, the eating and drinking luxurious; the body is scarcely covered, but fed with dainties of a shameful description. The high buildings of the glass-houses ranged before the doors of these cottages, the great furnaces roaring, the swearing, eating, and drinking of these half-dressed,

black-looking human beings, gave it a most infernal and horrible appearance. One, if not two, joints of the finest meat were roasting in each of these little hot kitchens, pots of ale standing about, and plenty of early delicate vegetables.

"We had a gentleman with us who, being rather personally fearful, left us to pursue our own devices, which we did by calling and haranguing every separate family. We were in our usual luck as regards personal civility, which we received even from the worst of these creatures, —some welcoming us to Botany Bay, others to Little Hell, as they themselves shockingly called it."

Gradually the work extended over an area of fifteen miles, and finally of twenty-eight; so that the summer Sundays of Hannah and Patty were like those of a modern Colonial clergyman during the thirty most active years of their lives. They generally rode, on account of the bad roads, to one or other of their villages in regular rotation to assist in the teaching, keep everything up to the mark, and go with the children to church, where such of the clergy as had been stirred by their efforts catechised the children. Sometimes they slept in the village and assisted at the evening meeting of the elders for instruction. There was one place, indeed, where this could not be kept up for want of some one who could read!

In July was held what was called the Mendip Feast, when a dinner of beef and plum pudding was given to the children from all the schools. Here is a description of one of these occasions: —

"The clergy of most of the parishes attended, and led the procession. A band of rustic music — a tribute of gratitude from all the neighboring villages — stepped forward and preceded the whole, playing 'God save the King.' We followed the clergy; then Ma'am Baker and her two hundred Cheddarites; and so on, the procession ending with Nailsea, — the girls having fine nosegays, and the boys carrying white rods in their hands, the gentlemen and ladies weeping as though we had exhibited a deep tragedy, though the pleasing idea of the hungry going to be fed, I believe, caused these tears, rather those of joy than of sorrow.

"At the entrance of our circle the music withdrew, and the children then struck up their psalms and hymns. All were then seated in circles, fifteen completing the whole. The effect was really very interesting. When all were served, they arose; and each pastor, stepping into the midst, prayed for his blessing on his own flock. And this part of the ceremony they did well. Examinations, singing, etc., took place. At length every voice on the hill was permitted, nay, invited, to join in one general chorus of 'God save the King.' This is the only pleasure in the form of a song we ever allow. Instantaneously the children, their

masters and mistresses, keeping their eyes on the clergy and ourselves, fell into the procession as at the beginning, walked to the place where we first met, and every school marched off to their several districts singing Hallelujahs till they sank into the valley, and their voices could no more be heard. At this moment every heart seemed softened and subdued, and many eyes shed tears.

"Seven or eight thousand people attended, and behaved as quietly as the sheep that grazed around us. Thus did this day open to us much matter for reflection. Farmers and their wives mixed with their own poor, and rode in the same conveyances, their own wagons. The clergy headed this ragged procession with hats in their hands. Seven thousand people showed us they could be *quiet* on a day of merriment, not to say *innocent.* Upwards of nine hundred children were well fed as a reward for a year's labor, and that labor learning the Bible. The meeting took its rise from religious institutions. The day passed in the exercise of duties, and closed with joy. Nothing of a gay nature was introduced, but loyalty to the King; and this never interfered with higher duties to the King of kings. The examinations were in the repetition of the Bible, Catechism, and Psalms, when the children received prizes according to their proficiency. Either then, or at the annual school feasts, brides of good character were presented with a Bible, a pair of stockings, and five shillings, — almost a fortune when a spinning-wheel cost four-and-sixpence."

The repudiation of anything gayer than the National Anthem strikes us as strange, but the time had not yet come when the people could safely be taught to play. There was scarcely an innocent popular song in existence, simple enough for their understandings and unconnected with evil; and the children and their parents were still too utterly rough and uncivilized to make it safe to relax the bonds of restraint for a moment.

As John Newton playfully wrote after staying at Cowslip Green, and making the round of the schools, —

> "In Helicon could I my pen dip,
> I would attempt the praise of Mendip.
> Were bards a hundred I 'd outstrip 'em,
> If equal to the theme of Shipham;
> But harder still the task, I ween,
> To give its due to Cowslip Green."

CHAPTER X.

ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY WORK.

LITERARY work was not neglected for the affairs of the Mendip schools, which indeed *could* not be visited in the winter months by ladies far from strong, so that December sent the sisters to their house at Bath.

Thence Hannah wrote on the New Year's Day of 1792, —

"The waters, I think, are doing me good; and I have been very much better since I came to close winter quarters, owing, under God, to my being quite shut up. Much as I love air and exercise, the loss of them is but a petty sacrifice to what many are called to make; and as I have no avocation at present which makes it a duty to run risks by going out, I am thankful to be furnished with so good a pretence for laying in a little health for future services. For I have partly pledged myself in my own mind, if I live and have health and money, and the French do not come, to take up two new parishes next spring; but as they are four miles below Cheddar, I have never dared reveal my intention

to any one. I know sloth and self-love will say often, 'Spare thyself,' and I feel the extreme concern it will give to those to whom I would wish to give nothing but pleasure; but I have *counted the cost.* These parishes are large and populous; they are as dark as Africa; and I do not like the thought that at the Day of Judgment any set of people should be found to have perished through ignorance who were within my possible reach, and only that I might have a little more ease. I will not say that I am not at times discouraged from this idea; for example, this last week, when, with all my boasting, I have been laid by with five or six days of nervous headache."

Meantime Shipham —

"suffered dreadfully from a raging fever. We lost seven in two days, several of them our poor children. Figure to yourself such a visitation in a place where a single cup of broth cannot be obtained, — for there is none to give, if it would save a life. I am ashamed of my comforts when I think of their wants. One widow, to whom we allow a little pension, burns her only table for firing; another, one of her three chairs. I had the comfort, however, of knowing that poor Jones distributed what we sent most conscientiously, and ran the risk of walking into the pits with which the place abounds, and which were so covered with snow that he was near being lost. 'No words,' he writes me, 'could describe the sensations of this poor village at seeing a wagon-load of coal [we sent] enter the place.' I feel indignant

to think that so small a sum can create such feelings when one knows what sums one has wasted."

It was an anxious winter. "The teaching of the teachers is not the least part of the work," another letter says.

"Add to this, that having about thirty masters and mistresses with under-teachers, one has continually to bear with the faults, the ignorance, the prejudices, humors, misfortunes, and *debts* of all these poor well-meaning people."

Yet things were much improving: Mr. Drewitt, the curate of Cheddar, "preached most faithfully on Sundays, and gave a lecture in church on Tuesday evenings, *all for twenty-five pounds per annum*."

The Dissenters were beginning to take umbrage at Hannah's doings, and the High Church suspected her independence. She was advised "to publish a short confession of her faith," as her attachment both to the religion and government of the country had become questionable to many persons.

"I aver I was rather glad to hear it, as I was afraid I had leaned too strongly to the other side, and had sometimes gone out of my way to show on which side my bias lay. I have not room in my letter to Mrs. —— to tell her a true story recently transacted in London. A lady gave a very great children's ball:

at the upper end of the room, in an elevated place, was dressed out a figure to represent me with a large rod in my hand, prepared to punish such naughty doings."

The winter at Bath was saddened by the death of good Bishop Horne of Norwich, not many doors from the home of the Misses More; and likewise of a young cousin of Mrs. Wilberforce. In both cases Hannah and her sisters gave their whole hearts to sympathy with the mourners.

Hannah and Patty went to London in April, partly in the hope to recover a poor little heiress who at fourteen had been decoyed away from home, going in search of her with Bow Street officers, — all in vain, for the child had been betrayed into a marriage and carried to the Continent; and again, in London, doing all in their power to rescue a poor creature who had tried to drown herself from weariness of a sinful course — again, alas! in vain.

The two sisters had a pleasant visit at Fulham Palace, where Bishop Porteus was now installed. He took Hannah to see George III. open Parliament; and she was struck by seeing among the lady spectators, close to the foot of the throne, the Countess of Albany, once wife of Prince Charles Edward, — whose birthday, the 10th of June, strangely enough it was.

The course of the French Revolution was affecting Hannah powerfully. She had looked on at first with hope, and rejoiced in the destruction of the Bastille; but as the counsels of the more violent party began to prevail, disapproval soon became disgust and horror, and her pen was actively employed against the principles they avowed. A speech of Citizen Dupont in the National Assembly on the 14th of December, 1792, was a direct attack on religion, not unlike the declamations which, after the lapse of nearly another century, are again to be heard in France. "Nature and Reason, these are the gods of men," was his cry, as he called on the Assembly to found schools of public instruction whence Christianity should be banished. Against these arguments of Sansfoy, the Britomart of Mendip couched her lance, in a pamphlet whose proceeds were devoted to the support of the seven thousand emigrant clergy who had taken shelter in England. Emotion lifts the author into eloquence in her final paragraphs; above all, in the prayer with which she concludes,— that the righteous nation may haply find, while the discovery can still be attended with hope and consolation, that "doubtless there is a reward for the righteous; verily there is a God that judgeth the earth."

Paine's writings were exciting much alarm among the upper classes, and were either themselves or travesties of them spreading widely among the lower; and Miss More was entreated by persons from every quarter to write a popular refutation such as should be available for distribution. At first, doubting her own powers, she refused; but afterwards the idea inspired her, and in a few hours she had completed a tract called "Village Politics, by Will Chip," — a conversation in which she could give play to her native sense of humor.

Tom Hod the mason is discovered in a dismal state of mind by his friend Jack Anvil the blacksmith, who inquires the cause.

TOM. — Why, I find here that I am very unhappy and very miserable, which I should never have known if I had not had the good luck to meet with this book. Oh, 't is a precious book!

JACK. — A good sign, though, that you can't find out what ails you without looking into a book for it. What is the matter?

TOM. — Matter? why, I want liberty.

JACK. — Liberty! that 's bad indeed! What, has any one fetched a warrant for thee? Come, man, I 'll be bound for thee. Thou art an honest fellow in the main, though thou dost tipple a little at the Rose and Crown.

TOM. — No, no; I want a new constitution.

JACK. — Indeed! why I thought thou hadst been a desperate healthy fellow. Send for the doctor.

As Tom's grievances are disclosed, Jack has ready answers to them. As to equality: —

"Suppose in the general division our new rulers should give us half an acre of ground apiece, we could, to be sure, raise potatoes on it for the use of our families; but as every man would be equally busy in raising potatoes for *his* family, why then, you see, if thou wast to break thy spade, I, whose trade it is, should no longer be able to mend it. Neighbor Snip would have no time to make us a suit of clothes, nor the clothier to receive the cloth; for all the world would be gone a-digging."

TOM. — But still I should have no one over my head.

JACK. — That 's a mistake. I 'm stronger than thee, and Standish the exciseman is a better scholar; and we should not remain equal a minute.

Jack condemns the original French constitution, explaining how there the poor paid the taxes, and the quality nothing, and that ours is "no more like what the French one was, than a mug of our Taunton beer is like a platter of their soup maigre." So —

"because my neighbor Farrow t' other day pulled down a crazy old barn, is that a reason why I must set fire to my tight cottage? . . . Those poor French

fellows used to be the merriest dogs in the whole world; but since equality came in I don't believe a Frenchman has ever laughed.

TOM. — What, then, dost take French liberty to be?

JACK. — To murder more men in one night than their poor king did in all his life.

TOM. — And what dost thou take a democrat to be?

JACK. — One who likes to be governed by a thousand tyrants and yet can't bear a king.

TOM. — What is equality?

JACK. — For every man to put down every one that is above him.

TOM. — What are the rights of man? [N. B. This was during the Reign of Terror.]

JACK. — Battle, murder, and sudden death.

TOM. — What is it to be an enlightened people?

JACK. — To put out the light of the gospel, confound right and wrong, and grope about in pitch darkness.

Hannah published anonymously, and through Rivington instead of Cadell. In consequence, she was inundated with presents and recommendations of "Will Chip," while hundreds of thousands of copies were in circulation. The King was delighted with it, and Bishop Porteus, who was in the secret, wrote this note to Hannah: —

MY DEAR MRS. CHIP, — I have this moment received your husband's dialogue, and it is supremely excellent.

I look upon Mr. Chip to be one of the finest writers of the age. This work alone will immortalize him; and what is better still, I trust it will help to immortalize the Constitution. If the sale is as rapid as the book is good, Mr. Chip will get an immense fortune, and completely destroy all equality at once. How Jack Anvil and Tom Hod will *bear* this I know not; but I shall rejoice at Mr. Chip's elevation, and should be extremely glad at this moment to shake him by the hand, and ask him to take a family dinner with me. He is really a very fine fellow.

It was perhaps a greater compliment, though a less desirable one, that the Axbridge people made Tom Paine's effigy share the fate of Guy Fawkes. Some of the special favorites at Shipham joined them, and the result was a revel at the public house, of which the Shipham men showed themselves most bitterly ashamed; and the most promising one of all could not for many months, nor till after an earnest conversation with Hannah More, recover his spirits or believe himself forgiven. The answer to Dupont actually raised two hundred and forty pounds for the emigrant clergy. At the same time, a pamphlet came out complaining of this benefaction, as interfering with the Divine will that the French priests should starve!

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHEAP REPOSITORY TRACTS.

"VILLAGE POLITICS" had been a first essay in writing, not in the Johnsonian language, which was second nature to Hannah More, but in a tongue "understanded of the people," — not attempting to reproduce their dialects, but to give simple, vigorous, plain English. The delight with which the little book was hailed was an incitement to produce something more of the same kind. There were plenty of young people by this time in the Mendip district who could read; but there was absolutely nothing for them to read, easy to understand or inexpensive, besides the ballads and broadsheets of last, dying speeches, and the tracts which the disciples of Tom Paine and the Jacobinically inclined were endeavoring to circulate.

The only book hitherto written for the poor was Mrs. Trimmer's "Instructive Tales;" and there were not enough of these, nor was the volume cheap enough, to supply what was needed. The council of sisters therefore came to a deci-

sion to produce three tracts a month, — stories, ballads, and religious readings, — at so cheap a rate as to undersell the revolutionary publications. It could not be done except at a heavy loss, and the labor prevented remunerative literary undertakings; but the want was felt to be so great that the sacrifice was willingly made. The Duke of Gloucester (that brother of George III. who had married the Countess of Waldegrave), Bishop Porteus, Wilberforce, and others assisted in the expenses of publication. The pamphlets were printed at Bath, on paper and with illustrations hideous to modern eyes, but which did not trouble the minds of the eighteenth century. They were termed "Cheap Repository Tracts;" and stall-keepers and hawkers were persuaded and bribed to take a stock of them, and they went off most rapidly. Foremost was "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain," which incidentally reveals many curious facts about the condition of the poor. The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain, the model of courtesy, who is, we are told, a portrait from the life, has eight children, and six shillings a week to keep them on. "Only three" under five years old. At that age, they begin to earn a half-penny, and afterwards a penny a day by knitting. The boys go out "crow-keeping" or stone-picking; and they

live in a hovel with only one room above and below, with scarcely any chimney. Indeed, they hardly ever have much fire; for they do little cooking, and fuel is very dear. The poor wife had had a severe illness, and, as the shepherd justly observes, "Rheumatism, sir, without blankets by night or flannel by day is but a baddish job, especially to people who have little or no fire." However, this is mentioned by the good man to enhance his gratitude for two new blankets and a half a crown. It may be feared that cottage accommodation has not advanced as much as other matters. We have an inventory of the furniture, — a table; four brown wooden chairs; an iron pot and kettle; a poor old grate that scarcely held a handful of coal, which was taken out as soon as the water boiled; an old carved elbow-chair and a chest; a candlestick and a bright spit, kept for ornament instead of use. The Sunday's dinner consists of a large dish of potatoes, a brown pitcher, and a piece of a coarse loaf. When the shepherd has devoutly given thanks, his little girl exclaims, "Father, I wish I was big enough to say grace. I am sure I would say it heartily to-day; for I was thinking what *poor* people do who have no salt to their potatoes." This same little Molly gathers the locks of wool left by the

sheep on the brambles, the mother cards it, the biggest girl spins it, and the children knit it into stockings for themselves. The father mends their shoes, as he had a great dislike to their being barefoot, as destroying self-respect. Altogether the tale is an idyl of religious content and frugality.

Wilberforce said (*not* to the author) that he would rather present himself before Heaven with the "Shepherd" in his hand than with "Peveril of The Peak," — which was in fact contrasting the choicest work of one author with the least choice of the other. When in 1795 Hannah went to London, she found that it had made quite as much sensation as her large books; but the loss was so heavy on these tracts, that Cadell told her he "would not stand in her shoes for five hundred pounds over and above the subscription;" nay, according to another calculation, one thousand pounds would not cover the expenses at any rate.

Every one was reading the tracts. The Duchess of Gloucester, to whom Hannah was presented by Lady Waldegrave, quoted the "Shepherd" three times, and told how she had desired one of her ladies to stop an orange-woman and ask her if she ever sold ballads. "No, indeed," said the woman; "I don't do anything so mean,

I don't even sell apples!" However, she condescended to take some of the tracts, and presently came back with two shillings gained by them.

On the other hand, Horace Walpole, now become Earl of Orford, rallied Miss More, she says, —

"on what he calls the ill-natured strictness of my tracts, and talked foolishly enough of the cruelty of making the poor spend so much time in reading books, and depriving them of their pleasure on Sundays. In return I recommended him and the ladies present to read 'Law's Serious Call.' I told them it was a book that their favorite, Mr. Gibbon, had highly praised."

She heard that in an illness he had exclaimed, "I am sorry I scolded poor Hannah More for being so religious; I hope she will forgive me." Soon after, he sent her Bishop Wilson's edition of the Bible, superbly bound in morocco, and with a flattering inscription. "Alas!" she wrote to her sister, "when I receive these undue compliments, I am ready to answer with my old friend Johnson, 'Sir, I am a miserable sinner.'"

A few persons volunteered assistance in the writing, one being Mason, the author of "Caractacus" — a tragedy of considerable merit — and the friend and biographer of Gray; but out of

half a dozen ballads which he offered, four were rejected, — "three because they had too much of politics, and one because it had too much of love." No one could write quite to the mark except Sally and Patty, who produced some of the best of the series. While in London, Hannah wrote the best of her ballads, called, "Turn the Carpet," — a dialogue between two carpet-weavers, who are forming the pattern, as is well known, from the wrong side. One complains, —

> "In spite of what the Scripture teaches,
> In spite of all the parson preaches,
> This world (indeed, I 've thought so long)
> Is ruled, methinks, extremely wrong."

With more to the same effect ; to which the other replies, —

> "This world, which clouds thy soul with doubt,
> Is but a carpet inside out.
> As when we view these shreds and ends
> We know not what the whole intends,
> So when on earth things look but odd
> They 're working out some scheme of God.
> What now seem random strokes will there
> In order and design appear.
> Then shall we praise what here we spurn'd ;
> For then the carpet shall be turn'd."

When it was shown to Bishop Porteus, he said, laughing, "Here you have Bishop Butler's 'Analogy,' all for a half-penny."

A committee was formed, with Archbishop Moore at the head of it, for promoting the circulation of the tracts, and undertaking part of the expense. During this absence from home, however, a great loss befell the sisters in Mrs. Baker, — that first schoolmistress whom the sisters had been wont playfully to term among themselves "Bishop Baker;" for all their other mistresses had been trained by helping in her model school, and she had besides been a perfect evangelist to Cheddar, with Sunday-evening teachings under the sanction and guidance of the clergy, and by the care of the clubs which promoted among the women virtue, thrift, and decency.

She was not well enough to be present at the Mendip Feast of '95, from which also Hannah was absent, being still in London. When Sally and Patty visited Cheddar, on Sunday, they found Mrs. Baker very ill; she died ten days later, and her funeral was most remarkable. Patty writes to Hannah, —

"Who else has ever been so attended, so followed to the grave? Of the hundreds who attended, all had some token of mourning in their dress. All the black gowns in the village were exhibited; and those who had none had, some broad, some little bits of narrow ribbon such as their few spare pence could

provide. The house, the garden, the place before the door was full. But how shall I describe it? Not one single voice or step was heard; their very silence was dreadful. But it was not the least affecting part to see their poor little ragged pocket-handkerchiefs, not half sufficient to dry their tears. Some had none; and the tears that did not fall to the ground they wiped off with some part of their dress. When the procession moved off, Mr. Boake, who was so good as to come to the very house, preceded the corpse with his gown and hat-band, which being unusual added somewhat to the scene; then the body; then her sister and myself as chief mourners, — a presumptuous title amid such a weeping multitude; then the gentry, two and two; next her children, near two hundred; then all the parish in the same order, — and though the stones were rugged, you did not hear one single footstep.

"When we came to the outer gate of the churchyard, where all the people used to wait to pay their duty to her by bows and courtesies, we were obliged to halt for Mr. Boake to get in and get his surplice on to receive the corpse with the usual texts. This was almost too much for every creature; and Mr. Boake's voice was nearly lost. When he came to, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' he could scarcely *utter* it; but to *feel* it was a better thing. On her entrance into the church the little remaining sight we had left disclosed to us that it was nearly full. How we were to be disposed of I could not tell. I took

my old seat with the children, and close by her place Mr. Boake gave us a discourse of thirty-five minutes entirely on one subject. His text was from St. John. He said he chose it because it was the last she made use of to him (I was sitting on her bed at the time). He added: 'She looked around her and observed it "was comfortable to have kind friends, but much better to have God with one."' His sermon was affecting and bold; as a proof of the latter, though the vicar was there and he himself was curate, he said, with an emphasis in his voice and a firmness in his look, 'This eminent Christian first taught salvation in Cheddar.'

"When we drove near to the grave, and the last solemn rite was performed, and 'ashes to ashes, dust to dust' was pronounced, every lady threw in her nosegay. I was almost choked. When Robert Reeves, John Marshal, and the six favorites let down the coffin, they stood over it in an attitude never to be described, and exhibited a grief never to be forgotten. They feared at one time Mr. Gilling would have to be taken out of the church. The undertaker from Bristol wept like a child, and confessed that without emolument it was worth going a hundred miles to see such a sight."

In "Hester Wilmot" Hannah described her own method, and Mrs. Baker's in the tracts. The "Village School," its second part, is a picture of the difficulties of the scholars. She is a

girl with a tipsy father, and a mother with whom cleanliness is a passion, who refuses to let her go to school unless she is paid for it, but offers little children, whom the good lady of the story declines. However, Hester is at last allowed to come; and presents a shining example by her love of learning texts and Catechism, her obedience and diligence, and refusing to go out to eat cakes and drink ale at the fair which began on Sunday evening.

"The Two Shoemakers" are in a measure like Hogarth's apprentices, — one constantly travelling upwards, the other downwards until at last he gets lodged in jail for debt, where his life of riot is checked by that horror of the last century, jail-fever. He is only redeemed by his virtuous friend just in time to save his life, but when he has become so crippled in his limbs as to be obliged to find a home in the workhouse.

The most spirited of the tales is "Black Giles the Poacher, containing some Account of a Family who had rather live by their Wits than their Work." The children begin life by rushing to open a gate on the road, and besetting the occupants of every carriage that passes through; and then follow various lines of pilfering. Giles's avowed trade is rat-catching; but

he always takes care to leave a few rats to keep up the stock, or even to introduce them into fresh hunting-grounds. Tawny Rachel, his wife, is a fortune-teller; and we have the story of a poor victim whom she deludes into deserting a faithful lover to marry in favor of one who has administered a fee to the sibyl. Rachel's best red cloak is her ironing-cloth on Sunday, and her blanket by night! There is more action in this story than in most of them. The robbery of Widow Brown's red-streaked apples, and the suspicion being directed to the good boy of the parish, is very exciting; especially as the excellent Tom Price is in woful danger of being set in the stocks or whipped round the market-place. However, on the next Sunday, Dick, the least depraved of the poacher's family, who has received some little kindnesses from the unlucky Tom, is found lingering about near the school, and is inveigled into it. There a lesson on the Eighth Commandment touches his heart; and when he sees Tom on the point of being punished, he springs forward and makes full confession. He is saved from his father's vengeance by the poetical justice which kills Giles by the downfall of a wall from which he is stealing a garden-net.

There is a story of farmer life, where the

wealthy farmer's wife makes all her pies and puddings on Sunday mornings to last the week; and though the family go to church in the afternoon, it is to converse with their neighbors in the next pew during the Lessons. The daughters go to a boarding-school; and a worthy lover is rejected because he cannot dance the *minuet de la cour*, though he had curried some favor by making out a rebus or two in the "Lady's Diary." As their father says: "When I want to know what hops are a bag, they are snatching the paper to know what violet soap is a pound. And as to the dairy, they never care how cow's milk goes as long as they can get some stuff they call milk of roses. Seeing them disputing violently the other day about cream and butter, I thought it a sign they were beginning to care for the farm, till I found it was cold cream for the hands and jessamine butter for the hair." He takes up one of their books, and "I was fairly taken in at first, and began to think I had got hold of a godly book; for there was a deal about hope and despair and death and heaven and angels and torments and everlasting happiness. But when I got a little on I found there was no meaning in all these words, or if any, it was a bad meaning. Eternal misery, perhaps, only meant a moment's disappointment about a

bit of a letter; and everlasting happiness meant two people talking nonsense together for five minutes."

"Mr. Fantom" is the life and death of an atheist of the Jacobin fashion; and "The Delegate" is a clever skit that with a very few alterations might be used at the present day. "Sorrowful Sam," which was Sally's production, is mentioned as having given infinite comfort to a sick and despondent cottager.

There are a few allegories; by far the best of which is "Parley the Porter," which is on the same idea as Bunyan's "Siege of the City of Mansoul,"—though probably Hannah had never heard of the latter, since she did not like allegory, and never read the "Pilgrim's Progress" till after she had emerged into the literary world. Her poems and ballads are not of very high quality, perhaps from the deficiency in imagination which made her averse to mysticism or allegory,—though she could turn an epigrammatic couplet in a telling manner. "The Bad Bargain" is a sort of "Devil's Walk":—

> "See, there the Prince of Darkness stands
> With baits for souls in both his hands!
> To one he offers empire whole,
> And gives a sceptre for a soul;

To one he freely gives in barter
A peerage, or a star and garter;
To one he pays polite attention,
And begs him just to take a pension.

"Some are so fixed with love of fame
He bribes them with an empty name.
For fame they toil, they preach, they write,
Give alms, build hospitals, or fight;
For human praise renounce salvation,
And sell their souls for reputation.

"See at yon needy tradesman's shop
The universal tempter stop!
'Would thou,' he cries, 'increase thy treasure?
Use lighter weights and scantier measure;
Thus thou shalt thrive.' The trader's willing,
And sells his soul to get a shilling."

The farmer who scorns to cheat is tempted at last; the jolly youth —

"sells his soul
In barter for a flowing bowl."

And the maiden, —

"A slave to vanity's control,
She for a riband sells her soul."

In one year two millions of these tracts were sold, — a really extraordinary amount, considering how few parishes were even tolerably worked in those days. In many instances, they banished

mischievous publications from small shops; and they were eagerly hailed by most of those who wished to promote innocent reading among the poor, though Dr. Wordsworth, the Master of Trinity, pronounced them more "novelish and exciting" than he wished, — perhaps because Hannah, in consequence it may be of her early apprenticeship to the Tragic Muse, was somewhat inclined to dispose of her worst characters by suicide. For the three years between 1794 and 1797 she devoted her pen entirely to this work; but the expense was so heavy that she could not keep it up any longer, and indeed her tracts continued for some twenty years to be the staple light literature in such orthodox village lending libraries as existed.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BLAGDON PERSECUTION.

MRS. BAKER'S death was not the only trouble that befell the zealous sisterhood in these years. Old friends were passing away in London: Horace Walpole, a friend of twenty years, died in 1797, Edmund Burke the same spring, — both during the two months which were all Hannah could spare to Mrs. Garrick and the Porteus family. While at Fulham she saw the wedding of the eldest daughter of George III. with the Duke of Wurtemberg. She observes, —

"As I looked at the sixteen handsome and magnificently dressed royals sitting around the altar, I could not help thinking how many plans were perhaps at that very moment formed for their destruction; for the bad news from Ireland had just arrived."

These were anxious years, both politically and morally, and there were serious troubles in the Mendip world. Betsy Baker became unsat-

isfactory after her mother's death; and it was a relief when she married.

Then Young, the Nailsea master, who seems to have been an excellent but injudicious man, contrived to affront the farmers, so that they insisted on his removal, though they had no distinct accusation to bring against him. And when the ladies refused, they did all they could to discourage attendance at his classes; and at length he was transferred to Blagdon, where the Misses More had been warmly invited by the rector, Dr. Crossman, and the curate, Mr. Bere, to open a school. The damp of the place brought on spasms in Hannah's face. She fainted, and in her fall dashed her face against a stone wall, injuring herself severely; and was so far from recovered when Mr. Wilberforce brought his bride to Cowslip Green that he insisted on carrying her off to Bath for a short course of the waters, leaving, as she said, "poor Patty to work double tides." Wedmore, not far from Cheddar, was taken in hand. There the farmers lived in actual terror from the miners. But the principal landlord of Wedmore, Mr. Barrow, declared that no school was wanted; for when the people gamed or rioted in the churchyard on Sunday, he sometimes went and cursed and swore at them a little, and as he was

overseer, they then dispersed always. His wife decidedly held that "the poor in a loomp are bad." She said that Providence intended the poor to be servants and slaves; it was ordained that they should be ignorant and wicked, and we could not alter what was decreed.

On the Sunday before the school was to be opened there was a curious scene. The clerk read out a paper signed John Barrow, summoning all opposed to the school to meet on Friday at the church; and the clergyman read another calling on parents and children to meet for the opening of the school on Sunday. Not a creature would sign the paper prepared against the school. A person on whose estate the despot had a mortgage answered, "Mr. Barrow, though I am much in your power, I am still a man!" To all his commands he received the same answer; and after furiously abusing the curate he declared that the opening of the school would be the beginning of a revolution like the French. "It is all over with property," he cried in the spirit of Tennyson's farmer. "If property is not to rule, what is to become of us?"

There was no place in which to keep Sunday-school except the church; and as Barrow prevented that from being used, the school had to meet under an apple-tree. But there a new dif-

ficulty arose; for while the children were being taught to sing Watts's hymns, a farmer ran down to the clergyman who was assisting, crying, "Oh, sir, I am afraid this must be Methody."

It appears that the Methodists had once preached under an apple-tree of his mother's, which had soon after died. On this, the wise-acres of the parish called a vestry meeting, and agreed that since Methodist preaching blighted the apple-trees, it must be banished with rotten eggs. A fortune-teller was consulted whether the singing were really Methodistic, and sagely made answer that if the hymns were not, the tunes were, since they were not in Farmer Clap's book! However, the Misses More, finding the curate and the poor really anxious for the schools, built a house with the aid of their supporters, Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Thornton.

Having finished the tracts, Hannah was writing another book dealing with the upper classes, called, "Strictures on Female Education." Hitherto her troubles had been all local, from the ignorance of the petty tyrants of the fields, the failure of her instruments, or disappointment in her pupils; but this book brought her into more serious difficulties. It was one of those works which it seems inevitable that a thoughtful woman should contribute to the good influences

on her own generation. It was full of good sense; indeed, it is amusing to see how similar were the errors of the former generation to those of our own time. There is, for instance, a protest against abridgments and compendiums that might serve the present day; and again, a chapter called, "On Definitions," has a capital protest against exaggerated language. "A tradesman may *not* be the most good-for-nothing fellow that ever existed, merely because it was impossible for him to execute in an hour an order which required a week;" a lady may *not* be "the most hideous fright the world ever saw," though the make of her gown may have been obsolete for a month; nor may one's young friend's father be a monster of cruelty, though he may be a quiet gentleman who does not choose to live at watering-places, but likes to have his daughters at home with him in the country.

We are in the habit of looking on the youth of our grandmothers as a time of subjection; but we find that Hannah avers that "among the improvements of modern times, and they are not a few, it is to be feared that the growth of filial obedience cannot be reckoned," and proceeds to dwell on the lack of discipline and obedience just as she might do in the present day. She is very anxious to persuade mothers to educate

their children themselves, and to promote innocent pleasures. "'To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven,' said the wise man; but he said it before the invention of baby balls, — an invention which has formed a kind of era, and a most inauspicious one, in the annals of polished education. This modern device is a sort of triple conspiracy against the health, the innocence, and the happiness of childhood."

One strong chapter was on "Sensibility," — a fashion gone out at the present day, but which was supposed to be the chief grace of young ladies, who were taught to consider that feebleness was their charm, and to "cherish a species of feeling which, if not checked, terminates in excessive selfishness;" and the writer complained that "the poets, who, to do them justice, are always ready to lend a helping hand when any mischief is to be done, have contributed their full share towards confirming these feminine follies."

The latter part of the book dealt with deeper questions, — not condemning a share in public amusements for grown persons, but discouraging them and making the test of their lawfulness, whether we can ask a blessing on our enjoyment from our Maker, and thank him for it.

Then follows a wise chapter on "Worldly Spirit;" and lastly a statement of the primary doctrines of Christianity, laying very great stress upon the corruption of human nature and the necessity of a change of heart and life in building up the Christian character, and ending with a dissertation on the duty and necessity of prayer.

That this somewhat unguarded statement as to the mischief done by the poets occasioned an attack from Peter Pindar, which Bishop Porteus called gross and coarse ribaldry, rancor, and profaneness, mattered little; but it was a greater injury that the connection with Wilberforce, at a time when all efforts against slavery, either black or white, were suspected as revolutionary, excited bitter sneers from the "Anti-Jacobin Review." It was still more distressing that an old friend and neighbor, Archdeacon Daubeny, was alarmed at the latter chapters of her book, which he considered to have a strong flavor of Calvinism. Indeed, considering that the authoress believed herself a thorough churchwoman, they are curiously lacking in any reference to church ordinances or means of grace. She had *said* nothing not borne out by the Articles and Liturgy; the point was what she had *not* said. However, she wisely made no attempt to argue publicly with the Archdeacon; and his letters

were not answered. The serious thing was that the rumor of these attacks, on religious and political grounds, stirred up her only half-conquered enemies in the more reluctant parishes to an endeavor to put an end to her work among them.

It began at Wedmore, which was a "peculiar" under the patronage of the Chapter of Wells. The farmers presented a petition against the schools with the statement that the master had called the Bishops dumb dogs, and said that all who went to church without hearing him would go to hell. The Bishop, Dr. Moss, knew and valued the good ladies, and invited them to dine whenever they passed through Wells. But Wedmore was a "peculiar" where he had no power; and it is impossible not to remark that there is never a mention throughout all the parish work of a confirmation nor of a visit from a bishop.

The Dean of Wells was for the time prejudiced by his attorney, who declared that the ladies taught "French principles," and who was employed by Barrow to take legal measure against them for teaching without a license.

Of course, this came to nothing. Old Bishop Moss, who was nearly ninety, used to say, "When I hear it is Miss Hannah More, I know

it is all right." But this had little effect. An opposition school was started at Wedmore, and the children driven to it by the parish officers. The poor clung closely to their benefactresses; and on the obnoxious master being removed and a mistress sent in his place, things began to mend. But the signal had been given for revolt; and a still worse opposition broke out at Blagdon, whither the Misses More had been so urgently invited by the rector, Dr. Crossman, who lived at Bath, and the curate, Mr. Bere, who was rector of Butcombe, — it having been apparently the habit of the clergy to live anywhere but in their own parishes.

The disturbance began in the winter of 1799–1800, while the sisters were wintering at Bath. Mr. Bere had adopted Socinian opinions, and preached a sermon which shocked Young, the schoolmaster, who had been removed from Nailsea for imprudent zeal. He seems to have used some expressions which offended the curate; and in the midst of a serious illness at Bath, Hannah received a letter peremptorily demanding that the Monday classes for adults should be discontinued, and Young himself be dismissed on the plea that he had permitted extemporary prayer. The matter was looked into; and Hannah, who had no love for dissent,

and knew, as she expressed it, that "vulgar people will make their religion vulgar," discontinued the classes and rebuked Young.

All was quiet for a year and a quarter; and Hannah and Patty went together to London, where they made their usual round of visits. They called on Lady Elgin at Carlton House, where Hannah saw —

"the pretty little Princess Charlotte, then three years old. She had great delight in opening the drawers, uncovering the furniture, curtains, lustres, etc., to show me. For the Bishop of London's entertainment and mine the Princess was made to exhibit all her learning and accomplishments, — the first consisted in her repeating the 'Little Busy Bee;' the next in dancing very gracefully, and in singing 'God Save the King,' which was really affecting, all things considered, from her little voice. Her understanding is so forward that they really might begin to teach her many things. It is perhaps the highest praise to say that she is exactly like the child of a private gentleman, — wild and natural, but sensible, lively, and civil."

In the midst of this sojourn at Fulham, a letter arrived from Mr. Bere peremptorily demanding the suppression of the schools, and containing from an inhabitant an affidavit taken by himself, as a justice of the peace, against

Young's personal character, adding that this was only a specimen, as he had taken many more of a similar description.

The Bishop of London and Hannah's other friends were infinitely shocked at this attack; and she knew this affidavit to be that of a weak-minded lad whom she had often assisted. She wrote to Sir Abraham Elton, of Clevedon Court, who was at once a clergyman and magistrate, and who was much better known to Bere than to herself. His investigation completely cleared the master; and the return of the ladies was prosperous. The Dean of Wells had become their friend, and gave them warm support at Wedmore; and Sir Abraham, at the Shipham Festival, before twelve clergymen, preached a sermon which had a great effect. Indeed, as Mr. Bere was threatening the Misses More with penal statutes, Sir Abraham returned the compliment by showing him to what he had rendered himself liable by his open defiance of the doctrines of the Church. His championship turned public opinion for the most part in their favor; but at Yatton the opposition was so determined that the school had to be removed to Chew Magna, — "populous, ignorant, and wicked."

Unfortunately, the rector, Dr. Crossman, in-

stead of coming to inquire in person, sent for his curate to explain; and by the advice of Bishop Moss Hannah More gave up the school. She was, perhaps partly in consequence of this strain, ill with an ague that lasted seven months.

Sir Abraham Elton, however, continued his gallant championship, preaching again at the Cheddar Club feast, where seventy gentry gathered, including Mr. Tudway, the member for Wells. Patty laments having to act like the rest of the world, and give a dinner to those who did not want it, and only tea to many hundreds who had no dinner at home.

It was almost a triumph; and Dr. Moss wrote most kindly to her. But Wedmore was as troublesome as ever; and the farmers actually presented the two sisters at the Archdeacon's visitation for teaching without a license, declaring they would never rest till they had worried the ladies out of the parish. Nevertheless, Patty went bravely the round of all the parishes, holding the feasts and making the little addresses, while her sister was too ill for the exertion.

Sir Abraham at last obtained from the Bishop the thirteen affidavits which the curate of Blagdon had taken against Young. Of them Hannah wrote to Wilberforce, —

"Among Bere's affidavits, which are as plenty as blackberries, one is taken by a lunatic whom as such I have helped to maintain. People start out of ditches and from under hedges to listen to the talk of our poor pious laborers as they are at work, and then go and make oath (which, it seems, is unexampled). Mr. Bere (who doubtless set them to listen) receives depositions in his own cause. I really did not take the pains to read them through, it was such wretched stuff. Six, I think, go to prove that Young is a Calvinist; several that he was heard to pray *extempore in private;* and one accused him of the heavy sin of having done it on the public nights. . . . My dear friend, I have prayed and struggled earnestly not to be quite subdued to my *mind;* but I cannot command my *nerves*. And though pretty well through the bustle of the day, yet I get such disturbed and agitated nights that I could not answer for my lasting if the thing went farther. 'How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?' is my frequent exclamation as I walk in my garden and look at the steeple and the village of Blagdon. I know if I had a lively faith I should rejoice to be thought worthy to suffer in the cause of Christ; but I cannot help mourning for our Jerusalem. I mourn to see nothing is thought a crime but what they are pleased to call enthusiasm."

She was even accused of making her schools pray for the French, while she was actually ex-

erting herself in behalf of the Somersetshire volunteers. At Shipham, when there was an alarm of the French landing at Fishguard, —

> "The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sunless caves;"

and the male population were actually met marching to the defence of Bristol. The ladies of Barley Wood had even offered their house as a station for the troops if required.

Sir Abraham Elton re-examined the oath-takers, and with such effect that the Lord Chancellor Loughborough advised the bringing an action for libel against the slanderers; but she held fast by the rule she had chosen for herself, "The King's command is, 'Answer him not.'" In point of fact, in five years' time no less than five of these accusers had been prosecuted for libels against other persons.

Bishop Moss, on the exposure of Bere's behavior, with the full concurrence of the rector withdrew his license, and requested Miss More to restore the school, which she did; but though Bere was only a curate, there was no displacing him. He would not resign house or church, threatened a lawsuit, and an appeal to the Archbishop. And Dr. Moss, who was timid and feeble, actually yielded to the storm and let the man remain; so that the school was again broken

up, and Blagdon soon fell back into its previous habits.

There was all the time a war of pamphlets between the curate and the baronet. The silence of Miss More having been mentioned as a sign that she had no defence to make, Sir Abraham cited the famous silence of Scipio when accused of treason to the Commonwealth. Bere's rejoinder was: "You have prostituted the name of Scipio, and rendered that of Hannah More supremely ridiculous. In sooth, sir, the queer and humorous figure your Scipio in petticoats offers to the mind's eye mocks gravity into hysterics. You are not made for sportive tricks. You have done your cause no good by your disgraceful freak." Again, he boasted, "Look ye, Sir Abraham, I am descended in direct line from Gwyn ap Glendour ap Cadwallader ap Styfimog — and so on up to Adam, sound men and true."

Nine clergymen, among them the Bishop's son and his chaplain, issued pamphlets in her defence; and when the two sisters went to London, she was received with increased affection at Fulham. Bishop Horsley and all the persons most distinguished for their excellence eagerly testified their sympathy and indignation. Alexander Knox, one of the most orthodox of men,

spoke of the attack as a national disgrace. The persecution seems to have been directed upon her in consequence of Wilberforce's desire for peace with France, as well as of his great crusade against the slave-trade. In the temper of the times such sympathies were thought to savor of revolution, and any attempt to improve or elevate the lower classes was held to be suspicious; and thus the "Anti-Jacobin Review" disgraced itself by personal attacks on two such women as Hannah More and Sarah Trimmer, and on Bishop Porteus as their supporter. The pamphlets were immeasurably scurrilous, — one even asserting that the Cheap Repository Tracts ought to be burned by the common hangman; another declared that Hannah was in love with two officers and an actor, not knowing, perhaps, that she was in her sixtieth year.

Early in 1802 Bishop Moss died; and Hannah took the first opportunity of writing to his successor, Dr. Beadon, a full and dignified statement of her principles and her system, together with a history of the persecution, which she "attributes in great part to the defenceless state of her sex," and to her declared resolution to return no answer.

"I am assured by those who have carefully read the different pamphlets against me, that while I am

accused in one of seditious practices, I am reviled in another as an enemy to liberty, — in one, of being disaffected to Church and State; in another, of being a ministerial hireling and a tool of Government. Nay, the very tracts are specified for which 'the venal hireling' was paid by the Administration (by Mr. Pitt, I think). In one I am charged with praying for the success of the French; in another, with fomenting by my writing the war with France, and savagely triumphing at every victory of what the author calls 'these friends to the general amelioration of human society.' I am accused of delighting in a war 'which we madly carried on, which began in iniquity and ended in disgrace,' — in one place, of 'not believing one word of Christianity;' in another, of idolizing the Athanasian Creed, which the author advises me 'to order myself to be wrapped in as a winding-sheet.'"

She goes on to describe her plan of instruction for the children.

"They learn on week days such coarse works as may fit them for servants. I allow of no writing for the poor. My object is not to make fanatics, but to train up the lower classes in habits of industry and piety. I know no way of teaching morals but by teaching principles, and of inculcating Christian principles without a good knowledge of Scripture. I own I have labored this point diligently. My sister and I always teach them ourselves every Sunday, except during our absence in the winter. By being

out about thirteen hours, we have generally contrived to visit two schools the same day, and carry them to their respective churches."

As to the mistakes of her teachers, she allows that she had sometimes erred in her choice, and "the most vigilant prudence could only discharge such as proved to be improper." She adds, —

"I need not inform your Lordship why the illiterate when they become religious are more liable to enthusiasm than the better informed. They have also a coarse way of expressing their religious sentiments, which often appears to be enthusiasm when it is only vulgarity or quaintness. But I am persuaded your Lordship will allow that this does not furnish a reason why the poor should be left destitute of religious instruction. . . . Can the possibility that a few should become enthusiastic be justly pleaded as an argument for giving them all up to actual vice and barbarism?"

The new Bishop returned a hearty and kindly answer, wishing Miss More all success, and promising his protection and every encouragement he could give. From that time the persecution began to die away. Mr. Bere sank into obscurity; and when he died, in 1814, was recollected as having done nothing for the good of

either his own parish or that of which he had taken charge. Yet at Bath the personal scandals were slow to die out; and even within the last twenty years slanders against this blameless woman have been repeated.

CHAPTER XIII.

BARLEY WOOD.

EARLY in 1802 the More sisterhood made another migration. The cottage at Cowslip Green was too slightly built for the winter residence of ladies in delicate health and advancing in years; and Bath had become distasteful to them. They therefore purchased a piece of land named Barley Wood, about a mile distant from Cowslip Green and in the same parish of Wrington, and there built a comfortable roomy house which became their home for many years.

The laying out of the grounds, planting, and gardening gave them great delight; and in the fashion of the time they placed little shrines and tablets with inscriptions to their friends, living and departed, in favorite spots.

A family party of five old maids in those days might have been derided; but on the contrary their house was a centre of intellectual as well as religious society, and they received and entertained many of the most distinguished people

of the time, as well as former pupils who were like daughters to them, while the house was also the resort of half the population of the Mendip parishes, who were always coming over to consult or ask assistance from the two diligent workers known as Mrs. Hannah and Mrs. Martha, — for just at this time the sisterhood had assumed the good old title of mistress before the Christian name, as was then thought becoming in spinsters of elder years.

The first trouble was the death of Mr. Drewitt, the good curate of Cheddar, who had worked with the sisters, and been persecuted together with them. After returning from the funeral, Hannah writes in her journal, "If I am not the better for her [the widow's] example on this occasion, it will be among the number of my sins."

A fresh task was imposed on the authoress by one especial request of Queen Charlotte; namely, that she would write a book of advice on the education of the little Princess Charlotte of Wales, then about six years old, and looked upon as the future Queen Regnant. Perhaps the idea was suggested by the letters in "Adèle et Théodore" from the Chevalier de Roseville, in which Madame de Genlis actually described what she was doing for Louis Philippe; but

though the request was a command, it was a curious thing to publish for every one's reading the line of study and training recommended for the royal child.

The book was finished and published anonymously in 1805, dedicated to Bishop Fisher of Exeter, who had just been appointed tutor to the Princess. It was written with great care and consideration, and is full of excellent practical good sense applicable to women in every station, especially in the chapters on the study of history and the choice of books.

Among "books of amusement" the foremost of her selections is "Don Quixote." "Wit," she quotes, "is gay; but humor is grave. It is a striking illustration of this opinion that the most serious and solemn nation in the world has produced the work of the most genuine humor." After this, she recommends the tales most removed from resemblance to ordinary life, — such as the "Arabian Nights" and Pope's "Odyssey," — and she has a separate section on Shakspeare, together with Potter's translations of the Greek tragedians. Her chapters on the "Arts of Popularity," and on "Zeal for Religious Opinions no Proof of Religion," are excellent; and though we cannot read the summary of English history without being amused

at the different light since cast on characters and events, we feel that it comes from a high-minded and sensible woman, well read in the best literature accessible. She has a good chapter on the Church of England according to her lights, and dwells especially on the "Via Media." "Though her worship be wisely popular, it is also deeply spiritual; though simple, it is sublime." She did not however presume to enter upon advice as to the personal management of the young Princess, going rather into intellectual matters excepting in one chapter on the perils of flattery to sovereigns.

On the whole it may be feared that these hints proved about as useful to poor Princess Charlotte as Bossuet's works, "In usum Delphini," to the Grand Dauphin; but the loyal Hannah remained in happy ignorance of how father, mother, and grandmother contended over the high-spirited girl, who meanwhile, under Lady Albemarle's easy rule, laughed at Bishop Fisher, and ran wild with George Keppel.

Hannah and Patty were together at Fulham Palace when the book appeared. It was presented by Bishop Fisher to the royal parents and grandparents, when the Queen certainly read it through and was much delighted with it; and altogether it attracted much attention and

approval. The "Anti-Jacobin" even praised it highly; and this perhaps incited the "Edinburgh Review," then in its mordant eager youth, to cut it up, objecting to female learning and to the preference for Rollin's history to Gibbon's, which after all does not occupy the same field. Those two remarkable men, Jebb and Knox, wrote the species of criticism which is really precious, and which was accepted in a grateful spirit, leading to some correspondence with Mr. Knox.

The next two years of Hannah's life were spent in a sick-room. A chill caught in the autumn of 1806, on one of her Sunday rounds, led to a pleuritic affection accompanied with fever, which was doubly serious to a person always delicate and now in her sixty-first year. For a whole year her pulse could not be materially reduced; and for another she was debarred both from writing and from visiting her schools. In the time of danger the strongest possible demonstrations of affection were made by her friends; and the poor were in the deepest grief, though Patty did her best for them.

Meanwhile, as an after-clap of the Blagdon persecution, a pamphlet came out accusing Mrs. Hannah More of hiring two men to assassinate a clergyman; of being engaged in Hadfield's

attempt to assassinate George III.; and of being art and part with Charlotte Corday in the murder of Marat, — all as a hireling of Pitt. This was actually the work of a couple of infidel and Jacobinian curates who appear to have escaped scot free.

However, in the summer of 1808, after two years' confinement to the house, Hannah was able to go to church, and was, after change of air at Weymouth, able to be among her scholars again, preparing for the twentieth anniversary of the schools at Cheddar. There had been time for the effects of the work to show themselves in the characters of the people who had been brought up under the care of the ladies.

Dearer to her than all her fame must have been what she records in a letter to Wilberforce: —

"Do you remember John Hill, our first scholar, whose piety and good manners you used to notice? He afterwards became a teacher; but war tore him from us. Judge of our pleasure to see him at Weymouth in full regimentals, acting as paymaster and sergeant-major! There was a sort of review. Everybody praised the training of eight hundred men so well disciplined; the officers said they were fit for any service. One of them said to me: 'All this is owing to the great abilities and industry of Sergeant

Hill. He is the greatest master of military tactics we have. At first he was so religious that we thought him a Methodist; but we find him so fine a soldier and so correct in his morals that we do not trouble ourselves about his religion. He will probably be adjutant at the next vacancy.' By the way, we never had so good a meeting as this year at Shipham. I did not dare venture. Poor Patty, though ill able, entertained near a hundred gentry at dinner, among whom were about twenty clergy. It is a fatiguing and expensive day, but I trust it has had its uses. Many similar institutions have sprung up in consequence."

Hannah was returning to literary enjoyments, and welcomed with delight Walter Scott's earlier poems. Her judgment given at the same time on "Corinne," in a letter to Sir W. W. Pepys, is worth having: —

"There never was such a book, — such a compound of genius and bad taste, such a fermentation of sense and nonsense. The descriptions of Italy are the best, and the descriptions of love the worst, I ever met with. There is no shading. As there is little nature it excites little interest; and the virtuous hero is to me a gloomy specimen of frigid sentimentality. Corinne herself gave me too much the idea of Dr. Graham's Goddess of Health, or the French Goddess of Reason, for me to take a very lively interest in her. Yet let me acknowledge that though, like Pistol, I

swallowed and execrated, yet I went on swallowing; and I must own it is a book which requires great knowledge and very considerable powers of mind to produce."

The autumn brought a visit from the Bishop of London, — one of the most valued of her still surviving friends. He was so feeble and broken in health that she had little hope of seeing him again, and he continued in a weak state all the winter. On the 2d of May he wrote a note, entreating her prayers, saying that he was in much difficulty and distress, but not explaining why. Three days later came the following: —

MY DEAR MRS. MORE, — Prayer has had its usual effect, and all is now perfectly right.

B. L.

It was the last note she was ever to have from him. On the 24th Mrs. Kennicott wrote from Fulham to announce his death, and she then explained what had troubled him; namely, the report of the institution of a club, under the patronage of the Prince of Wales, which was to meet on a Sunday. Feeble as he was, he requested an audience of the Prince. He was supported by two servants, and hardly able to move with their assistance; but he reached the presence of the Prince, and with agitated earn-

estness implored him to change the day. The Prince was touched; and this great effort gained the victory. The old man went home to die content.

He had bequeathed one hundred pounds to Hannah More, and after the fashion of the time she dedicated to his memory a plantation at Barley Wood, putting up an inscription, as she had done in the case of other much-loved friends. She must have missed the approval of one who had so warmly appreciated her works, one after the other, when in the winter she made a new venture,— a religious tale or novel for the upper classes, entitled "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife." Cœlebs is a young gentleman of four-and-twenty, very carefully brought up by an excellent mother, and serving as a peg upon which to hang numerous sketches of society and character. Cœlebs goes forth, instructed by his mother and enamoured of the character of Milton's Eve, to seek for as near a likeness of the latter as may exist; but in accordance with the dying wishes of his parents intends to come to no decision till he has consulted his father's old friend, Mr. Stanley.

He visits London, as it were, to reconnoitre. He goes to so ill-dressed and badly managed a dinner that he concludes that the daughters must be learned ladies, and therefore begins by

asking one if she did not think Virgil the finest poet in the world: "She started and said she had never heard of the person I mentioned, but that she had read 'Tears of Sensibility' and 'Rosa Matilda' and 'Sympathy of Souls' and 'Too Civil by Half' and the 'Sorrows of Werther' and the 'Stranger' and the 'Orphans of Snowdon.'"

"Yes, sir;" chimed in the younger sister, who did not rise to so high a pitch of literature, "and we have read 'Perfidy Punished' and 'Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy' and the 'Fortunate Footman' and the 'Illustrious Chambermaid.'"

He rose from the table convinced "that it is very possible for a woman to be totally ignorant of the ordinary but indispensable duties of common life without knowing one word of Latin."

Next he goes to dine with his father's friend, Sir John Belfield, in Cavendish Square. All is delightful here, conversation and everything else, till dessert, when in rush all the children to be petted and flattered and fed, little to their own benefit, and greatly to the discomfiture of the guest, who finds rational talk impossible.

Then follows a visit to one of those ladies whose form of piety has somewhat gone out of fashion, who avows that since grace alone is efficacious, it was not worth while to attend to

the religious training of her daughters, but to leave them to be converted. Another family disgusts Cœlebs by their more than toleration of a man of fashion of bad character, and so do a pair of young ladies by their heartless coquetries.

With the Belfields he is happier; but they are too easy-going, and think "*things may be carried too far*" when the standard of the gospel is suggested. Their house becomes a sort of home to him; and he gets the opportunity of seeing the lady who is a slave to fashion and the lady whom we should now term a frisky matron, but who was then "a modish dowager." Certainly types repeat themselves: Lady Bab affected no delicacy, she laughed at restraint, she had shaken hands with decorum, —

> "She held the noisy tenor of her way
> With no assumed refinement."

Next he meets a Mrs. Fentham, a religious lady who sits in Passiontide with "A Week's Preparation" open before her, but talking to all the comers and goers, and while refusing a guinea to help an old servant after a fire, gives ten to Signor Squallini's benefit. Then there is a charming, warm-hearted, rattle-pated Lady Melbury, — a too flattering likeness, as Sir William

W. Pepys declared, of the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire. She utterly ruins her poor tradesfolk by running in debt, weeps, borrows, and begins her course again.

And after all these experiences, Cœlebs betakes himself to Stanley Grove, where, of course, all is perfect, especially the eldest daughter, Lucilla, who is altogether the model woman. She is neither a beauty nor a genius, and neither plays, sings, nor draws, though she is cultivated up to the point of having a perfect taste and appreciation of music and art. As to study, when one morning the hero asks Mr. Stanley his views on the propriety of young ladies learning the dead languages, —

"Mrs. Stanley smiled, Phœbe laughed outright, Lucilla, who had nearly finished making tea, blushed excessively. Little Celia, who was sitting on my knee while I was teaching her to draw a bird, put an end to the difficulty by looking up in my face and crying out, 'Why, sir, Lucilla reads Latin with papa every morning.' I cast a timid eye on Miss Stanley, who, after putting the sugar into the cream-pot and the tea into the sugar-basin, slid out of the room, beckoning Phœbe to follow her."

So dreadful was it to learn Latin in those days! Yet Phœbe, because she had a superabundance of vivacity and a tincture of romance,

was thoroughly taught arithmetic and some amount of mathematics.

On the eighth birthday of one of the younger little girls, which is very prettily celebrated by a tea-drinking in a bower, she gives up all her "little story-books," as the year before she had given up all her gilt books with pictures; "and I am now," she says, "going to read such books as men and women read."

Mr. Stanley allows that a slower child might be kept on these stories a year longer, but he says, —

"These books are novels in miniature, and will lead to the want of novels at full length. The too great profusion of them [what would he say now?] protracts the imbecility of childhood. They arrest the understanding instead of advancing it. They give forwardness without strength."

In all this he was perfectly right, though perhaps too rigid in excluding all youthful literature; but he was much in the habit of reading aloud to his children the best parts of amusing authors whom he did not put into their hands. Days's "Sanford and Merton," Berquin's "Ami des Enfans," the English selection called "The Looking-glass for the Mind," and the German tale translated by Mary Wollstonecraft under the title of "Elements of Morality" and most pow-

erfully illustrated by Blake, were probably in Mr. Stanley's mind when he complained that there was no intimation in them of the corruption of human nature, and thus that they contradict the Catechism when it speaks of being "born in sin and the children of wrath."

In fact, before Mr. and Mrs. Stanley have reformed many of their friends, and Cœlebs has fulfilled his destiny and resigned his title, there is a good deal of theological discussion, such as could not fail to bring the authoress into hot water; and first with the Pope's Vicar-General in England, Dr. Berrington, who took serious exception at her having said in the comment on Mrs. Fentham's formal observances, "Why, this is retaining all the worst part of Popery." One would think he might have been used to hearing harder things said of his Church! However, very courteous letters passed between them; Hannah professed her warm admiration for St. François de Sales, Bossuet, Massillon, and Bourdaloue, and moreover for Pascal and Messieurs de Port Royal, and added, "I am too zealous in my own faith not to admire zeal in the opposite party." On the other hand, Dr. Berrington replied by picking her sentence to pieces, and showing her its logical incorrectness, advising her to expunge it altogether, which she seems

to have done, for it does not occur in the edition of her collected works. It is curious that he makes no protest against her Jansenist tastes. Did he share them, or was he too wise to betray to an outsider that there were differences of opinion? "As if," he writes, "our tenets, scattered through a thousand brains, were as varying and unstable as your own."

Very different was the handling poor Cœlebs received at the hands of Sydney Smith in the "Edinburgh Review." Of course, when descending into the arena of secular literature, it was only reasonable to expect to be judged critically on the literary merits of the work, and not to view its religious object as serving for a shield against censure. There were persons who were far from any profanity, and only desired truth and piety to prevail, who convulsed a private circle with laughter by turning into ridicule the priggishness unavoidable in imaginary models of male excellence, — especially when drawn by female hands, and those so utterly unable to construct an interesting story as Hannah More had always been. Distrust of what is known as Evangelicalism — partly of its doctrines, and chiefly of the narrowness and what in Germany is called "pietism" — caused the darts to be directed against the book; and they

were barbed with the irony of which the Canon of St. Paul's was a master.

To those more seriously disposed persons who barely tolerated fiction of any sort, Cœlebs, with its really able sketches of character and epigrammatic turns, was genuinely entertaining and delightful. Mrs. More was continually receiving letters recommending it to her perusal; and those friends to whom she sent it, concealing the secret of its authorship, were greatly excited. Dr. Randolph writes: "Junius's letters nor Chatterton's poems hardly occasioned more anxious research or eager controversy in public than Cœlebs did, at least in a certain circle." He himself had come to the conclusion that the writer was a lady and a spinster, because of a certain Mrs. Carlton, — a model victim to an ill-starred marriage. He says, —

"This inimitable wife, who sets us all a-crying, does not scruple to converse with her religious female friends on the faults of her husband; and she fears having a female confidant in the house with her, lest she should talk of them always."

The first edition was sold out in a day or two, the second in a fortnight; eleven had appeared in nine months, and thirty before the close of the author's life, twenty-four years later.

As her earlier friends passed away a younger generation took their places, chiefly belonging to those good and excellent allies of Wilberforce who were known as the Clapham party. Zachary Macaulay had been brought to Barley Wood by Mr. Wilberforce in 1796, and had there fallen in love with Selina Mills, — a former pupil of the elder sisters who was like one of themselves. Their marriage had taken place after Mr. Macaulay's expedition to Sierra Leone; and visits to their house at Clapham were among Hannah's London pleasures. On calling there one day in one of the last of her thirty-five winters in London, she was met at the door by a fair pretty boy, about four years old, who politely informed her that his parents were out, but if she would be so good as to come in he would give her a glass of old spirits. This was "Master Tommy," known in after-life as Lord Macaulay. On being asked what prompted his extraordinary offer, he could only say that Robinson Crusoe always had some!

Hannah took the greatest delight in the quaint little boy and his sister, her godchild and namesake. The description of the young Stanleys being able to dispense with childish books at seven and eight years old was probably taken from these children; for little Tom was

given to sitting up in his nankeen frock expounding from a volume as big as himself and talking in "quite printed words," and his sister was his close companion. They were often visitors at Barley Wood, where the old ladies knew how to make real companions of children.

"Mrs. Hannah 'would keep the boy' with her for weeks, listening to him as he read prose by the ell, declaimed poetry by the hour, and discussed and compared his favorite heroes — ancient, modern, and fictitious — under all points of view and every possible condition, coaxing him into the garden under pretence of a lesson on botany, sending him from his books to run round the grounds or play at cooking in the kitchen, giving him Bible lessons which invariably ended in a theological argument, and following him with her advice and sympathy through his multifarious literary enterprises."

Childish squibs and parodies were produced under her encouragement; one called "Childe Hugh and the Laborer," a pathetic ballad, seems to have been suggested by the battle of Blagdon, Childe Hugh alluding to Sir Abraham Elton's knightly defence of her cause against "the Abbot." It was meant as an imitation of Percy's "Reliques," but, we are told, strongly suggests "John Gilpin." The enjoyment with which the Stanleys are represented as listening to that

poem as a birthday treat may well have been copied from that of this most amusing little guest. Hannah constantly corresponded with him; and, as his nephew and biographer says, to her "was due the commencement of what eventually became the most readable of libraries." When he was only six years old she wrote, —

"Though you are a little boy now, you will one day, if it please God, be a man; but long before you are a man I hope you will be a scholar. I therefore wish you to purchase such books as will be useful and agreeable to you *then*, and that you employ this little sum in laying a little tiny corner-stone for your future library."

A year or two after, she thanks him for his —

"two letters so neat and free from blots. By this obvious improvement you have entitled yourself to another book. You must go to Hatchard's and choose. I think we have nearly exhausted the Epics. What say you to a little good prose, Johnson's 'Hebrides,' or Walton's 'Lives,' unless you would like a neat edition of Cowper's poems, or 'Paradise Lost' for your own eating? In any case choose something you do not possess. I want you to become a complete Frenchman that I may give you the works of Racine, the only dramatic poet I know in any modern language that is perfectly pure and good."

It is somewhat amusing that whereas Louis Philippe was Madame de Genlis's favorite pupil, and Dean Stanley the representative of Dr. Arnold, Lord Macaulay should have been so much under Hannah More's influence! The aptest scholars do not always run in the groove that their teachers have left them.

CHAPTER XIV.

SORROWS.

THE noontide season of Mrs. Hannah More's life had been an unusually long and brilliant one, scarcely broken by death or change; and the five sisters were all on the verge of old age. Still together, still with perfect oneness in heart and life, and the younger pair still active and effective, though delicate and often suffering. Yet perhaps the first trace that the shadows of earth were drawing on, and making them dwell more than ever on light from above, may be found in the fact that in spite of the success of "Cœlebs," it was the last of Hannah's secular works. The next was "Practical Piety," published in 1811, — a book of advice on the religion of the heart and the manner of carrying it into daily life, since, as she says, "little habits at once indicate the sentiment of the soul and improve it."

Those affectionate critics, whose estimate is what an author values far more than any external opinion, had become sadly thinned in num-

bers; but Sir William Pepys wrote with hearty admiration that he thought "Practical Piety" the best of all Mrs. H. More's performances, and calculated "to terrify the wicked, to rouse the negligent, and to keep the most watchful on their guard." But he added that some of the best and most religious people he knew thought the rule too strict and almost deterrent. Hannah's reply was that—

"The standard of religion should always be kept high. The very best of us are sure to pull it down a good many pegs in our practice; but how much lower is the practice of those who fix a lower standard than the New Testament."

On the other hand, she tells Mrs. Kennicott, —

"I hear the high Calvinists declare war against 'Practical Piety.' Is it not a little hard that one must not write one's own sentiments, but the sentiments of others? We have many opinions in common; but if I adopted their peculiar opinions, I must write against my conscience. One of their criticisms will make you smile. They say that my having called the sun *he* is idolatrous, as if I believed in Phœbus Apollo. If this be true, both David and Saint John were guilty of idolatry."

The book was followed up by "Christian Morals" in 1813, carrying the principles of "Practical Piety" farther into details of common

life, and towards the end describing under the title of Candidus an ideal Christian, in whom every one recognized a portrait of Wilberforce. It was written in the midst of much suffering from biliousness, and likewise of constant watching the declining health of Mary, — that eldest sister whose energy and ability had been the main-stay of the family ever since, at twenty years old, she had undertaken the school, which had not only founded the fortunes of all, and supported her father in his old age, but had sent a sound and wholesome influence into many a home around. She died on Easter Sunday, 1813.

Hannah, to whom she had been another mother, wrote to Lady Olivia Sparrow, "I thought it something blessed to die on Easter Sunday, — to descend to the grave on the day on which Jesus triumphed over it. It is pleasant to see death without its terrors." Such a grief as this, and thus borne, left no permanent depression. The sisters turned their attention to their ordinary life; and Hannah's letter to Lady Olivia to thank her for a present of "Rokeby" began delightfully: —

A Story.

A little girl having wearied me very much the other day with "I want this, I want that, I want the

other," to put an end to her importunity, I said, "You want everything in the world; I suppose you will want the moon next." She took the hint, and soon after came in crying, "Give me the moon! It is my moon. I will have the moon!"

THE APPLICATION.

Now, I am a large spoiled child. Your Ladyship has so accustomed me to have all my wants — expressed, unexpressed — granted, and my very wishes and even thoughts anticipated, that I too, thus spoiled, am in danger of crying for the moon. You as a natural consequence will fly to Herschel, and consult him on the best means of conveying it, undertaking, if the whole should not be portable, to send me a crescent, or a still smaller slice.

Then follows a criticism on the poem, regretting the wasting the fifth canto in songs, so that the catastrophe in the sixth is hurried on.

In the summer of 1813 Mrs. Moore paid a visit to Lady Olivia at her house in Huntingdonshire, but she was ill almost all the time she was there; and when she went on to Mr. Henry Hoare's, at Mitcham, she had a great shock in the news of the death of her old friend, Lord Barham, with whom she had been about to stay. She again became so ill that she had only one meal with the family all the time she was at

Mitcham; but when she went on to Strawberry Hill, where Lady Waldegrave had made her home, some improvement in health enabled her to revisit the scenes where she had once been so happy. She writes to Lady Olivia, —

"That well-known spot recalled to my mind a thousand recollections, partly pleasing but more painful. The same feelings were excited in us as we called afterwards at Mrs. Garrick's (we did not find her). The library, the lawn, the temple of Shakspeare, — all of which I *would* see for the last time. What wit, what talents, what vivacity, what friendship had I enjoyed in both these places! Where are they now?"

Soon after Hannah's return Barley Wood was visited, after a seven years' interval, by Mr. and Mrs. Wilberforce and their two daughters; and their stay was very much enjoyed by both guests and hostesses. Wilberforce writes in his diary, —

"October 18th. — Dean Ryder came from Wells in the evening; truly pleasing and much talk with him. 19th. — The Dean and I walked before breakfast, which late because Lady Lilford and her family expected to it. Talked, walked, read to them Baxter's Life (the change of view and feeling). 20th. — After breakfast Miss Patty showed me her book of handwriting of eminent men, many of them written on purpose and very curious, — Edward VI.,

Queen Mary (William III.), Pope, Swift, Bolingbroke, and Atterbury; all the Admirals, General Wolfe, etc.; all the politicians, Washington, Franklin, Prior, Priestley, Burke, Fox, Pitt, Sir Joshua Reynolds; a beautiful letter from Horsley; Voltaire, Rousseau, Blackstone."

To his sister, Mrs. Stephen, Wilberforce writes, —

"You must have been greatly entertained at Barley Wood if your nerves were equal to the encounter; but you would miss the eldest sister. There was a place assigned to every one of the sisterhood, and not one of them could be spared without creating a void."

Certainly such testimony from one accustomed to the choicest circles in London confutes what Madame Bunsen hastily says; namely, that Hannah More's powers deteriorated "and were narrowed by being confined to the society of Mrs. Patty, Mrs. Betty, and the rest." In fact, they were women of intelligence fully equal to her own, and quite as agreeable, — Sally being always, even in old age, the liveliest and most amusing of the family, and Patty being, as ever, Hannah's other self.

The summer of 1814 was a quieter one than usual, for, as Hannah writes in June, "Our friends from all quarters being met in one com-

mon centre, *Emperor-hunting*." She took advantage of the leisure to work up an "Essay on the Character and Writings of Saint Paul," — a life study with her on which she had concentrated all her research into authorities. She was interrupted by a letter from Cadell informing her that she had outlived her copyright in her "Sacred Dramas," in the eighteenth edition, and that other publishers were bringing out editions, to his injury; so that he begged her to make some additions to the work for his benefit. Accordingly she wrote an additional scene for her drama of "Moses," making Miriam prophesy the deliverance from Egypt. Then she went back to Saint Paul, and was just at the very termination of the work, having locked her room-door to prevent interruption, when, as she was reaching across the fireplace for a book, the end of her shawl caught fire. She unlocked the door and called; and her sisters had the horror of seeing her at the top of the stairs, — one sheet of flame, as it seemed to them. But she had the presence of mind to retreat out of the draught; and Miss Roberts, one of the visitors, succeeded in extinguishing the flames before much harm was done to her person.

"I consider myself a monument of God's mercy," are her words to Mrs. Kennicott.

"Many trifling circumstances, which appeared to be providentially directed, contributed to my preservation. Being confined with a bad cold, I had, that day only, put on a thick stuff gown, which, however, was burned through the back and sleeves. The day before I wore a muslin gown (in December!). I had also on three shawls. The one next me was reduced almost to tinder before it could be got off; of the others little is left. It was in heroically tearing off these and taking me, flaming as I was, as if I had been an infant and laying me on the carpet, that Miss Roberts burned her hands so terribly. They were healed, however, sooner than my slighter wounds, which are now healed also, and I am able to put on a gown."

Scarcely had Mrs. More recovered from this accident before she had an attack of ophthalmia which consigned her to darkness and idleness for a time. However, her "Essay on Saint Paul" came out, and was accepted as usual, so that the entire first edition was disposed of in one day.

In spite of years and declining health, the sisters were as energetic as ever in making the round of their schools whenever they were capable of the exertion, and in getting up festivals when they had a cause to serve. In the summer of 1816 they had a great anniversary meeting

of the Bible Society in their grounds. Here is the description given to Mr. Wilberforce: —

"The meeting was the most genteel and numerous we have had. If our oratory was not of the first brilliancy, it had good sense and good temper to recommend it. We had near forty clergy of the Establishment. When the meeting was over, — which was held in a wagon-yard, as there was no room for them in the inn, — all the superior part of the company resorted by previous invitation to Barley Wood. A hundred and one sat down to dinner, and about one hundred and sixty to tea. Happily, it was a fine day; and above fifty dined under the trees, — the overflowing from our small house. They all enjoyed themselves exceedingly; and it had all the gayety of a public garden.

"Some may think that it would be better to add twenty pounds to our subscription and save ourselves so much trouble, but we take this trouble from a conviction of the contrary. The many young persons of fortune present, by assisting at this little festivity, will learn to connect the idea of innocent cheerfulness with that of religious societies, and may 'go and do likewise.' For no other cause on earth would we encounter the fatigue."

Indeed, all the four sisters were very ill that year, — Hannah with what was then called a bilious fever, Patty with liver complaint, Sally with dropsy, and Betsy with paralysis coming

upon other troubles. After about a fortnight of speechlessness, this good woman likewise went to her rest; and the three drew together again, feeling their ranks broken, but still brave, resigned, and cheerful.

The depression and discontent of 1817 set Hannah to work again — though "with a weak head and weak hand," after a bilious fever — at patriotic songs and leaflets, and at adapting "Village Politics" to the actual crisis. It came out again as "Village Disputants;" and six hundred were immediately bought by one person, and sent to Manchester for distribution. The songs too did good work. "I did not think to turn ballad-monger in my old age; but I thought it my duty," said Hannah.

The distress fell heavily on two of the Mendip parishes, where the schools had existed for twenty-eight years.

"They are all miners; all poor; and all have been unable to earn a penny, — the material they subsist upon, *lapis calaminaris*, with which brass is made, lying upon hand without any call for it, so that industry is of no use. After assisting them individually to the best of our power, my friend and neighbor, Mr. H. Addington, and myself have commenced merchants, and purchase a large quantity of their commodity weekly, which is deposited in warehouses till

better times return ; and both their minds and bodies are improved by having employment as well as bread. I am laboring hard to prevail on the *real* merchants to renew the trade by the time our private funds are exhausted. The distress of these eleven hundred souls has been exquisite. I condemn you to this tedious detail that you may know how acceptable your bounty has been."

For this account was elicited by a handsome donation for the benefit of the Mendip poor from Sir William Pepys. These exertions were made in the midst of ailments of all the three sisters and constant interruptions ; but still there was vivacity enough to enjoy any humorous event or anecdote. One which Sir William tells in his reply is worth repeating. There was a discussion at the Prince Regent's table which was the higher title, Dauphin or Prince of Wales, on which one of the company quoted the line, —

"Quanto Delphinis Balæna Britannica major,"—

adding, "For you know, sir, that your Royal Highness is the Prince of *Whales*." With this letter Sir William sent a further sum to assist these efforts for the welfare of the brass-workers of Shipham. The effect of the twenty-eight years' toil among those who had once been the terror of the neighborhood, and whose children's

stupidity was the despair of their teachers, was shown by the facts recorded in a letter to Mr. Wilberforce: —

"These poor people, who have often not tasted food more than once in two days, have never uttered a word against Providence or Government. A friend of mine called on one poor woman who was nearly famished, and asked her how she bore up. 'Madam,' said she, 'when I feel very faint I go up and pray two or three times a day, and I come down so refreshed.'"

It was in every way a sad time. Wilberforce's sister, Mrs. Stephen, who had been heart and part in the first doings at Cheddar, and throughout a warm sympathizer, died that winter; and the three ladies at Barley Wood were all suffering, — Hannah often with headaches, Patty, who had a liver complaint, weak and languid, and Sally with a frightfully diseased leg. Yet throughout Hannah was composing patriotic tracts and songs to meet the need of the times; and in six or eight weeks she produced a dozen.

Sally's illness lasted four months, for a long time not affecting her vivacity, but the last weeks were terrible. The leg was in such a state that it seemed enclosed in a black boot; but her patience was such that "she commonly sent her surgeon away in tears." Some relations of the Roberts family came to the assistance of Hannah

and Patty; and a record of these weeks was drawn up by one of them. The submission was perfect. Mrs. Sally had from the first guessed and predicted to a servant the course of her illness, adding that she never let an hour of the day pass without silently sending up the petition, "In the hour of death, good Lord, deliver us!" Yet she was so full of playfulness that friends who called could not believe what they were told of her condition.

"Poor Sally, you are in dreadful pain," said one of her sisters.

"I am indeed; but it is all well," she said.

When she left the sitting-room for the last time she cast a look around her full of a meaning no one forgot. Opiates were freely given, and these and the suffering prevented her from attending to reading; but texts were repeated to her as she could bear them. Once, when she seemed almost insensible, she cried, "Can anything be finer than that? It quite makes one's face shine."

One night she complained of too much light. "The smallest light is enough to die by."

Hannah asked if she had comfort in her mind.

"Yes, I have no uncomfort at all."

She was asked if she knew Miss Roberts.

"Oh, yes, I know everybody and remember everything."

"Ah, poor dear soul," said a servant, "she remembers her pains too."

"No," she answered; "I do not think of them."

All her wanderings were praise and prayer, generally verses of psalms; and the Saviour's name was the last intelligible word upon her lips. She died on the 17th of May, 1817; and only Hannah and Patty remained, still working cheerfully on. Much was in the way of revision of new editions of former works; and the death of Princess Charlotte led to the addition of an affectionate panegyric to the introduction of the hints on her education. "In spite of the dull task of reforming points and particles, I found the revisal of 'Practical Piety' a salutary and mortifying employment." This simple-minded woman tells Zachary Macaulay, "How easy it is to be good on paper! . . . I hardly read a page which did not carry some reproach to my own heart. I frequently think of a line which Prior puts into the mouth of Solomon, —

'They brought my proverbs to confute myself.'"

If fame could have puffed her up, she had enough. "Cœlebs" was translated into French,

and actually was favorably received by Madame de Staël; and several of the "Cheap Repository Tracts" were translated into Russian and widely circulated by a princess with the formidable name of Metchersky. "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain," the "Two Wealthy Farmers," and still more "Charles the Footman," must have been a curious study in Russia in the days of unmitigated serfdom.

Some of these tracts were also translated into Cingalese and Tamil; and the Chief-Justice of Ceylon, Sir Alexander Johnstone, sent the authoress a specimen of her drama of "Moses in the Bulrushes," written in Cingalese on a Palmyra leaf and enclosed in a beautifully carved and painted case. He further informed her of the abolition of slavery in Ceylon, and asked for a ballad that might be translated to be used at a festival to be held on the 19th of August, 1816, after which day every new-born child would be free. She produced a little poetical dialogue called the "Feast of Freedom," one verse of which it would be well to make a stock quotation in our schools, —

"Then let our masters gladly find
A free man works the faster;
Who serves his God with heart and mind
Will better serve his master."

The poem was translated by two Buddhist priests whom Sir Alexander had sent to England for education, and who were at Liverpool with Dr. Adam Clarke; and it was set to music by Dr. C. Wesley. Moreover, two Persian nobles who were studying in England visited Barley Wood. Much should we like to know what their real impressions of the place could have been, and of the two beautiful and dignified old ladies, so unlike their experience in their own country. Visitors constantly came; and the financial affairs and general supervision of the schools still rested on the sisters, and each had many days of sharp illness. But when in tolerable health and free from interruption, Hannah contrived to write five hours daily, and in the morning. "It is a great loss to me," she says, "that I can make no use of the latter part of the day except by knitting, which is, perhaps, the portion best employed."

Both sisters were very seriously ill in 1818, the attack coming on with shivering fits and pains as if the flesh were cut with knives. "My whole life," wrote Hannah, "from early youth has been a successive scene of visitation and restoration. I think I could enumerate twenty mortal diseases from which I have been raised up without sensible diminution of strength."

Depression of spirits never seems to have tried this happy sisterhood, nor did the power of being interested and amused ever fail them; and this no doubt greatly contributed to these recoveries. The summer of 1819 was spent quietly, except for a meeting of the Bible Society when one hundred and twenty gentry dined at Barley Wood, and two hundred drank tea.

"Tables were laid in the garden, prodigal of flowers; the collation was a cold one, but took two days to cook. We had, besides our neighboring gentry, many persons from Clifton and forty clergymen of the Establishment; and the white-robed nymphs with the groups under the trees made the prettiest show imaginable. You will judge that my health is improved, by my being able to go through such a serious fatigue. The success of these societies I have much at heart. Sometimes we hear of Christian Knowledge Societies opposed to Bible Societies; but I belong to both parties. I wish there was no such thing as party."

This is to Mr. Wilberforce; and in the same letter Hannah tells him, "I have been guilty of the weakness, at my age, of doing that imprudent thing, writing a book."

"A fresh crop of errors" seemed to her to have sprung up among professedly religious people, in a mania for a French education,

which had set in with the peace. As a protest against children being taken abroad to acquire a Parisian accent, she wrote "Moral Sketches of Prevailing Opinions and Manners."

As usual, the book prospered. Princess Sophia Matilda, the Bishop of Bristol, Sir William Pepys, and many others wrote warmly; and the Bishop (Monsell) pronounced that Mrs. More had indeed well used the ten talents intrusted to her.

CHAPTER XV.

SOLITUDE.

HANNAH and Martha had seemed to have one heart and soul between them from the time the little sisters had lain in the same crib seventy-three years before. Many an occupation had been shared, many a work talked over, many a long dark drive been shared, many a book read together, many an illness cheered by their sweet companionship. The other sisters had gone in regular succession of age; and Hannah must have thought that she, the frailest, would not be the survivor. But hers was to be the widowhood of the heart. In September, 1819, Mr. and Mrs. Wilberforce came to Barley Wood. His diary records, —

"Patty sat up with me till near twelve, talking over Hannah's first introduction to a London life; and I, not she, broke off the conference. I never saw her more animated. About eight in the morning, when I came out of my room, I found Hannah at the door. 'Have you not heard that Patty is dying? They called me to her in great alarm;' at

which from the ghastliness of her appearance I could not wonder. About two or three hours after our parting for the night she had been taken ill."

She had gone through much fatigue; for Hannah had not been well enough to go with the Wilberforces the round of the schools at Cheddar, etc. On that last night she had come to her sister's bedside and said, "They are all gone to bed, and our Wilberforce and I have had a nice hour's chat." In a very little time after this she awoke in frightful agony, ending after some hours in unconsciousness; but she lingered for about a week, often rambling in talk but quite peaceful. There was bitter lamentation and weeping all through the Mendips, and among the wide circle of friends who had felt the unusual charm of her society; and what could Hannah write more truly than "I may indeed now say, 'My house is left unto me desolate.' I bless my Heavenly Father, however, that He has not left me without consolation and support."

She was seventy-four years of age; and the feeling "I must finish my journey alone" could not but be strong upon her. "I have lost my chief earthly comfort, companion, counsellor, and fellow laborer," were her words to Daniel Wilson (afterwards Bishop of Calcutta). But

she was thankful throughout: "My loss is little compared with her gain; and the remainder of my pilgrimage will be short."

Mrs. Macaulay, the adopted younger sister, came to her early in November, to help her in looking over papers and setting things in order. She was greatly touched when the Shipham schoolmaster came over with his donkey and panniers to fetch the books yearly supplied to the school; and she asked him why no one from the parish had for weeks been at Barley Wood. "Why, madam," he answered, "they be so cut up they have not the heart to come."

These Shipham people, to a man, signed a loyal address originated among themselves, expressing their disapproval of the democratic agitations taking place in 1819; and it was presented to the Prince Regent with a note on their former act of patriotism.

The bereaved sister was not left alone. She always had the attendance of Miss Frowd, her excellent companion; and one or the other of her cousins, the Robertses, who had a house at Clifton, was almost constantly with her. Her eyesight and hearing were perfect; and though she could no longer visit her schools, she still attended to all the details connected with them. She did not shrink from preparing the school

rewards in the ensuing spring, though remembering how this had been the exclusive delight and work of Patty, who in her last round had distributed thirteen hundred of them.

In August she had a terrible illness which she fully anticipated would be her last. "Nothing but the icy hand of death can cool me," she said. "Poor Patty, I shall soon rejoin her."

But the rest was not yet attained. She began to recover; and when making some arrangements with a friend, she said, "Not that I have the remotest idea of living through the winter, but we must plan for time and prepare for eternity." When a little stronger she would exert herself, saying it was a mistake in old persons to suppose that because they could do little, they were therefore exempted from doing anything. Even if only one talent were left, it must still be used to the utmost.

She continued to admit innumerable visitors on this principle, and was as sprightly in conversation and correspondence as ever, trying always to inculcate some deeper thought, and taking interest in new and old books as much as ever, especially the "Life of Madame de Staël," about which she had a correspondence with the author, Madame Necker. During an attack of illness she received a letter from Cadell about a

new edition of the "Moral Sketches," to which he wished her to append —

"a short tribute to George III., then newly dead. I fancied that what was difficult might not be impossible. So, having got pen, ink, and paper, which I concealed in my bed, and next morning in a high fever with my pulse above a hundred, without having formed one idea, I began to scribble. I got on for about seven pages, my hand being almost as incompetent as my head. I hid my scrawl, and said not a word, while my doctor and my friends wondered at my increased debility. After a strong opiate I next morning returned to my task and finished seven pages more, and delivered my almost illegible papers to my friend to transcribe and send away. I got well scolded; but I loved my king, and was carried through by a sort of affectionate impulse."

The eulogy on the religious, moral, and domestic virtues of George III. is full of heartfelt love, and is, in vigor and language, a wonderful achievement for a sick woman of seventy-five.

She was in time restored to her usual state of health, and was as bright and vivacious as ever in conversation and correspondence. Sir Thomas Dyke Acland availed himself of this opportunity to get her likeness taken. As one of her letters says, —

"I had intended, as Dogberry says in the play, to bestow my tediousness upon you; but that most despotic of tyrants and most ardent of friends, Sir Thomas Acland, against my most earnest remonstrances and positive refusals has sent down Pickersgill to paint my portrait. I dreaded this foolish business so much as to lie awake about it; but I got through it, hitherto, better than usual."

In fact, two portraits were taken, one for Sir Thomas Acland, the other for Mr. Lovell Gwatkin, whose family had been her friends from early youth. A sweet-faced, bright-eyed old woman is shown, small and spare, of the fairy godmother type, in the close cap, with the frilled chin-stay and double ruffle then held to be appropriate to advanced age, but still with much of the life and fire of the sprightly young woman with powdered curls portrayed by Opie more than forty years before, in the merry days of Hampton and the Bas Bleu.

The last remnants of those days were passing fast away. Mrs. Vesey, the Sylph, had long since died, after long failure of intellect; Mrs. Montagu had died in 1800, Mrs. Boscawen some years later; and Mrs. More had lived to read with sad interest the memoirs not only of Johnson and Horace Walpole, but of Elizabeth Carter. And in the October of 1821 she wrote:

"I was much affected yesterday with a report of the death of my ancient and valued friend, Mrs. Garrick. She was in her hundredth year. I spent above twenty winters under her roof, and gratefully remember not only their personal kindness, but my first introduction through them into a society remarkable for rank, literature, and talents. Whatever was most distinguished in either was to be found at their table. He was the very soul of conversation."

Sir William Pepys was the last remnant of these old times; and a letter to him on the education of the poor, written in October, 1821, deserves quotation: —

"I think there is ultraism on both sides of the question. My views of popular instruction are narrow; the views of others I think *too* narrow. I will give you a sketch of my own poor practice at setting out; but opposition compelled me to lower it. Not the very poor only are deplorably ignorant. The common farmers are as illiterate as their workmen. It therefore occurred to me to employ schoolmasters who to sound piety added good sense and competent knowledge. In addition to instructing *all* the poor children in the parish on Sundays at my expense, I directed him to take the farmers' sons on week days, at a low price to be paid by them, and to add writing and arithmetic to reading, which was all I thought necessary for laborers' children. The master carefully instructed these higher boys also in religious

principles, which their fathers did not object to when they got it gratuitously. I had long thought that the knowledge necessary for persons of this class was such as would qualify them for constables, overseers, churchwardens, jurymen, and especially tend to impress them with a sense of the awful nature of an oath, which I fear is often taken without any sense of its sanctity. Farther than this I have never gone.

"Now I know the ultra-educationalist would despise these limits. I know not if you have seen a book on popular education written by a man of great talents. Truth compels me to bear my public testimony against his extravagant plan, which is that there is nothing which the poor should not be taught; they must not stop short of science. They must learn history in its widest extent. Goldsmith's Greece is nothing; he recommends Mitford, etc. Even the absurdity of the thing is most obvious; supposing they had money to buy such books, where would they find time to read them without the neglect of all business and the violation of all duty? And where is all this to terminate? Only cast back your eye upon Athens, where the upper gallery pronounced sentence on Sophocles and Euripides, and an herb-woman could detect the provincial accent of a great philosopher. Yet was there ever a more turbulent, ungovernable rabble? Saint Paul tells us how they spent their time. It was only to tell or to hear of some new thing. I have exerted my feeble voice to

prevail on my few parliamentary friends to steer the middle way between the Scylla of brutal ignorance and the Charybdis of a literary education. The one is cruel, the other preposterous."

Consumption of time in light reading, in her own class, displeased her: —

"Thirty volumes of Sir Walter Scott's novels have in the succession of a very few years covered every table. Figure to yourself a large family, where every-one reads for himself, the thousands of hours that have been thus swallowed up. . . . The useful reading compared with the idle, like our medicine compared with our food, is but as grains to pounds. . . . It is not that old age has made me insensible to the charms of genius. In that one respect, I think I am not grown obtuse. I have been really looking for leisure to read one or two of Sir Walter Scott's novels."

Mrs. More did not fail to enjoy Scott; but she thought that though his works were free from the coarseness of earlier writers, they were deficient in the practical precepts to be gleaned from them.

An illness which kept Mrs. More thirteen weeks in bed occupied the spring of 1821–22; but again she recovered, and resumed her usual habits. And her powers were not impaired, as may be seen by some verses which accompanied

a pair of garters. She was in the habit of knitting these to be sold for charitable purposes; and Sir Thomas Dyke Acland had bespoken a pair for a crown. It is worth while to compare this composition with the "Bas Blanc" she wrote with the stockings for the little Pepys forty years before. Few ideas are repeated; and those that are rather gain than lose in the process: —

Slowly, yet gladly, to my valued friend
The enclosed most faultless of my works I send.
Two cantos make the whole; surpris'd you 'll see
They 're better for their strict identity.
Length — to my previous works so worthy blame —
Here the just meed of your applause may claim.
If all my former compositions found
For critic harshness true and solid ground,
None of my ancient sins you here will see
Except incurable tautology.
Not e'en reviewers here can find a botch,
British, nor Quarterly, nor scalping Scotch;
The deep logician, though he sought amain
To find false reasoning, might seek in vain;
Quibbling grammarians may this work inspect,
Yet in no bungling syntax spy defect.
Its geometric character 's complete, —
The parallels run on but never meet.
Though close the knots, all casuists must agree
Solution would but break the unity.
Unravelled mysteries shall here be read
Till time itself shall break the even thread.
Nor could the rhetorician find, nor hope,

One ill-placed metaphor, one faulty trope.
High claims in this rare composition meet,
Soft without weakness, smooth without deceit.
Say not, as o'er this learned work you pore,
"The author nothing knows of classic lore."
The Roman satirist's self might laud my plan;
For to the end I keep as I began.
Though some its want of ornament may blame,
Utility, not splendor, was my aim.
Not ostentatious I, for still I ween
Its worth is rather to be felt than seen.
Around the feelings still it gently winds;
If lost, no comfort the possessor finds.
Retired from view, it seeks to be obscure;
The public gaze it trembles to endure.
The sober moralist its use may find, —
Its object is not loose, it aims to bind.
No creature suffers from its sight or touch, —
Can Walter Scott say more, can Byron say so much?
One tribute more, my friend, I seek to raise, —
You 've given, indeed, a *Crown*; give More your praise.

These verses were despatched just before a fever set in, from which her recovery at seventy-seven years of age was remarkable. She was bled seven times in a few weeks. A friend, Miss Frowd, nursed her, visited her schools, managed her clothing clubs, and wrote her letters. And she kept a little bag pinned to her curtain whence she sent relief by her doctor to the poor around, who were suffering from a vis-

itation of typhus, besides that two of their cottages were burned down within sight of her bedroom window, one through lightning.

Her letters, when again she could write them, are as amusing and spirited as ever. There is one to Mr. Wilberforce which shows that the march of intellect had made considerable progress in 1823, considerably to the good lady's dismay; for she held that though perhaps ten out of a hundred children might have abilities worth cultivation, the other ninety were better with no knowledge save of their Bible and Catechism. A little girl from one of the three-penny semi-genteel schools was brought into Mrs. More's room. A gentleman present asked her what she was reading.

"Oh, sir, the whole circle of the sciences."

"Indeed!" said he, "that must be a very large work."

"No, sir, it is a very small book; and I bought it for half-a-crown." Probably it was the same study as that of her neighbor in the next parish, who announced, "I learn *gography*, and the harts and senses."

Children of this stamp were frequently brought to Mrs. More to be examined and receive a small reward. One, after repeating a little poem very nicely, when asked, "Who was Abraham?"

after some consideration said, "I think he was an Exeter man."

Meantime, she tells Sir William Pepys, "There is hardly a city in America in which I have not a correspondent on matters concerning religion, morals, and literature." With a bequest from one of the Canons of Lincoln she redeemed two little slaves in the Burman Empire; and she had the pleasure of hearing that with the proceeds of a sale of an engraving of her abode, her American friends had founded a mission school for girls in Ceylon, and named it Barley Wood.

Her last book, "The Spirit of Prayer," was published in 1824, her eightieth year. It led to the last correspondence with her much-valued friend, Sir William Pepys, who died in the course of the next summer of 1825. Other great friends, Bishops Van Mildert and Fisher, and Lady Cremorne, were also taken in a few months' time; and none were more sincerely mourned than good Mr. Jones, of Shipham, — the first of the clergy who had worked heartily with her. In sixty-one years, during which he had been in holy orders, he had only on four Sundays failed to officiate.

All the time, whenever she was well enough, she admitted a continual succession of callers between twelve and three o'clock. Miss Frowd

calculated that in one week she saw eighty. "I know not how to help it," she wrote. "If my guests are old, I see them out of respect; if young, I hope I may do them a little good. If they come from a distance I feel as if I ought to see them on that account; if near home, my neighbors would be jealous at my seeing strangers and excluding them."

Here is a description by one of these visitors, in a private letter (given in a memoir published by Messrs. Fisher): —

"Before we came in sight of the little town of Wrington, we entered an avenue thickly bordered with luxuriant evergreens, which led directly to the cottage of Barley Wood. As we drew nearer the building, a thick hedge of roses, jessamine, woodbine, and clematis fringed the smooth and sloping lawn on one side; on the other, laurel and laurustinus were in full and beautiful verdure. From the shrubbery the ground ascends, and is well wooded by flowing larch, dark cypress, spreading chestnut, and some hardy forest trees. Amid this *mélange*, rustic seats and temples occasionally peep forth; and two monuments are particularly conspicuous, — the one to the memory of Porteus, the other to the memory of Locke.

"I was much struck by the air of affectionate kindness with which the old lady welcomed us to Barley Wood. There was something of courtliness about it, at the same time the courtliness of the *vieille cour*,

which one reads of and seldom meets. Her dress was of light-green Venetian silk; a yellow, richly embroidered crape shawl covered her shoulders; and a pretty net cap tied under her chin with white satin ribbon completed her costume. Her figure is engagingly *petite*; but to have any idea of the expression of her countenance you must imagine the small withered face of a woman in her seventy-seventh year, and imagine also (shaded, but not obscured, by long, perfectly white eye-lashes) eyes dark, brilliant, flashing, and penetrating, sparkling from object to object with all the fire and energy of youth, and sending welcome on all around.

"When I first entered the room Lady S—— and her family were there. They soon prepared to depart; but the youngest boy, a fine little fellow of six, looked anxiously in Mrs. More's face when she had kissed him, and his mamma said: 'You will not forget Mrs. Hannah, my dear.' He shook his head. 'Do not forget, my dear child,' said the kind old lady, assuming a playful manner; 'but they say your sex is naturally capricious. There, I will give you another kiss; keep it for my sake, and when you are a man remember Hannah More.' 'I will,' he said, 'remember that you loved children.'

"It was a beautiful compliment. After a good deal of conversation on indifferent topics, she commenced showing us her curiosities, which are numerous and peculiar. Gods given up by the South Sea Islanders to our missionaries; fragments of Oriental manu-

scripts; a choice but not numerous collection of books, chiefly in Italian, English, and French, — for she speaks all these languages with equal fluency; and above all, a large collection of autographs. . . .

"'I will now,' she said, 'show you some monuments of the days of my wickedness;' and she produced a play-bill where 'Miss More's new tragedy of "Percy"' was announced exactly fifty-two years ago. She looked to me at that moment as a resurrection from the dead, more particularly when she added: 'Johnson, Burke, Garrick, Reynolds, Porteus, all, all the associates of my youth have gone. Nor is there one of them whom I delight in praising more than David Garrick. In his house I made my entrance into life, and a better conducted house I never saw.' I never could agree in the *latter* part of the sentiment.

"'On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting. It was only that when he was off he was acting, and I only regret that his species of acting is not more practised by the world at large. I have never been to a play since his death; I could not bear it.' She told me it was nine years since she had been downstairs. 'But I am like Alexander Selkirk,' she added, laughing; 'I am monarch of all I survey. Every tree on this little domain was planted by my own hands, or under my special direction.'

"I bade her adieu with regret; for I never had the good fortune to meet with so perfect a relic of a well-spent life. The spirit within was as warm and cheer-

ful as if the blood of eighteen instead of eighty coursed in her veins. She is indeed a woman who has lived to good purpose."

The writer of this pleasant letter is rather provoking as to dates; for "Percy" was acted in 1778, and fifty-two years from that time would be 1830, when Hannah was eighty-five instead of seventy-seven, and was no longer at Wrington.

Some of the younger generation who were brought to the shrine at Barley Wood thought the style of conversation too complimentary. But the old lady herself belonged to an age when such forms of speech were thought ordinary civility; she herself was regarded with deep veneration, and humble-minded as she really was, such expressions seemed to her like mere courtesy. Playful she always was, and in the March of 1826 she extemporized the following "heroic poem," as she was pleased to call it, on seeing the carcass of a pig dragged home for dissection:

> The saddest sight that ere was seen
> Was Piggy rolling up the green;
> Though dragged, he still would roll alone
> Downward like Sisyphus's stone.
> This pig, as good as e'er was sold,
> Was worth not quite his weight in gold.
> That pork 's unwholesome doctors tell us,

Though of the fact I 'm somewhat jealous ;
And I believe beyond all question
Bacon is sovereign for digestion.
For this one cause, among a few,
I 'm glad I was not born a Jew.
No quadruped like Piggy claims
To give his flesh so many names.
The calf and sheep half starve the glutton
By yielding only veal and mutton ;
While all extol the liberal swine
For griskin and the savory chine.
How often does the brawny flitch
Adorn the table and enrich !
The stately ham, the rasher small
Are liked in every state ; and all
Who will confess they see no good in
The poignant sausage and black pudding,
The spare-rib, sweet-bone, ears, and snout,
My bill of fare will quite make out.
For I disdain my song to close
By stooping to the pettitoes.
He ne'er was seen to dance a jig,
Though a genteel and graceful pig ;
Yet when he round my field would prance,
It might be termed a country dance.
Those men who dancing lives have led
Are worse than nothing when they 're dead ;
While Piggy's goodness ne'er appears
Till closed his eyes and deaf his ears.
Though feeding spoiled his shape and beauty,
Yet feeding was in him a duty ;
In spite of this reproach or that,
It was his duty to grow fat.

Death was to him no awful sentence,
No need for sorrow or repentance;
How many a gourmand, stout and big,
Might envy thy last hour, O pig!

In the letter that follows this effusion Mrs. More speaks of fears that her head might not last out her body; but there are no signs of decay in the composition. There is plenty of vigor in a letter to Daniel Wilson, bearing date August 2, 1826.

"As to their reproaching you with being a Calvinist, I wish, as Bishop Horsley said in his incomparable charge, that before they abuse Calvinism they would just take the pains to inquire what it is. I hope to make you smile for a moment when I tell you this story: A little party was sitting at a comfortable game of whist, when one of the set, having a slight headache, turned about and asked a lady who was sitting by to take her cards for a few minutes. The lady excused herself by saying that really she could not play; on which the other exclaimed, 'Now that is what I call Calvinism!' It is a pity that Bishop Horsley could not have been by to have heard this satisfactory exposition of the doctrine — and so practical too!

"The only one of my youthful fond attachments which exists still in its full force is a passion for scenery, raising flowers, and landscape gardening, in which I can still indulge in some measure, as far

as opening a walk from my chamber window among a little grove of trees which I planted twenty-four years ago. . . .

"But I am running away from my object, which is that I scribbled the enclosed lines in a state of mind not very different from what you describe:—

Solitary Musings.

Lord, when dejected I appear,
And love is half absorbed in fear,
E'en then I know I 'm not forgot;
Thou 'rt present, though I see Thee not.
Thy boundless mercy 's still the same,
Though I am cold, nor feel the flame;
Though dull and hard my sluggish sense,
Faith still maintains its evidence.
Oh, would Thy cheering beams so shine
That I might always feel Thee mine!
Yet, though a cloud may sometimes rise
And dim the brightness of my skies,
By faith Thy goodness I will bless;
I shall be safe though comfortless.
Still, still my grateful soul shall melt
At what in brighter days I felt.
O wayward heart, thine be the blame;
Though I may change, God is the same.
Not feebler faith, not colder prayer,
My state and sentence shall declare;
Nor nerves nor feelings shall decide,—
By safer signs I shall be tried.
Is the fixed tenor of my mind
To righteousness and Christ inclined?

For sin is my contrition deep?
For past offences do I weep?
Do I submit my stubborn will
To Him who guards and guides me still? —
Then shall my peaceful bosom prove
That God not *loving* is but *Love*."

Mrs. More had expected to end her days in the house so dear for her sisters' sake, and where the garden and shrubbery which she could see from her windows were full of precious associations.

But a serious evil was growing up in her household. Her sisters had always attended to domestic matters, and set her at liberty for her literary and charitable undertakings; and she was unused to housekeeping or to the control of servants when Patty's death left all upon her hands, when already past threescore and ten. Her disposition had always been to shrink from administering rebuke; and a house where there was continual resort of visitors, and likewise of poor from all her parishes, was such as to need an active supervision that was impossible from a mistress so aged and so often confined to her room (though apparently the visitor quoted above must have been mistaken in thinking she had been nine years upstairs). The waste was such that she found in 1826 that she had ex-

ceeded her income in the two past years by three hundred pounds, and had to trench on her capital. She wished to sell the reversion of Barley Wood, and to remain to the last near the graves of her sisters in a place to which she was so much attached, while she submitted to the wastefulness and extravagance of the servants as a chastisement on her incompetence which affected no one's interest but her own. However, in 1828, in her eighty-third year, discoveries were made which showed that the mischief went far beyond mere waste and idleness, and that there were positive evils, bred of indolence and luxury; and the poor old lady had to be made aware that these dishonest and vicious servants were making her appear to tolerate the sins she had testified against through life.

She was terribly distressed; but as soon as she knew the truth, her resolution was taken at once. The servants were dismissed; and on a cold inclement day she left her beloved home for Clifton. Things must have come to a grievous pass, for several of the gentlemen of the neighborhood waited at her chamber door to protect her from anything that would distress her. She descended the stairs with a placid countenance, and then walked silently round the lower rooms, looking

up at the portraits of all the dear old friends long since passed away; then, when settled in the carriage with Miss Frowd, she gazed out on her trees and garden, and said, "I am like Eve driven from Paradise, but not, like Eve, by angels."

Yet of these wretched servants she said, "People exclaim against their ingratitude towards *me*, but it is their sinfulness towards God that forms the melancholy part of the case."

CHAPTER XVI.

CLIFTON.

A HOUSE at Windsor Terrace, Clifton, received Mrs. Hannah More, and speedily was rendered home-like by receiving her cherished possessions; while she was able to enjoy with thankfulness the beautiful view from the windows, and so many visitors poured in on her that she was persuaded to restrict them to two days in the week. With her usual buoyancy and cheerful gratitude, she wrote a list of "my court at Windsor Terrace," alluding to the numerous attentions and gifts that she received.

"The Duke of Gloucester, Sir Thomas Acland, Sir Edmund Hartopp, and Mr. Harford, — my sportsmen.

"Mr. Battersby, Mr. Piggott, and Mrs. Addington, — my fruiterers.

"Mr. Wilberforce, — my guide, philosopher, and friend.

"Miss Frowd, — my domestic chaplain and house apothecary, knitter and lamp-lighter, missionary to my numerous and learned seminaries, and without controversy the queen of clubs [the penny clubs of Mendip.]

"Mr. Heber, — my incomparable translator who by his superiority puts the original out of countenance."

Barley Wood was purchased by Mr. Harford; and about the same time the copyright of all Mrs. More's works was bought by Cadell. Her expenses being reduced within reasonable bounds, she had full scope for all her benevolence, and with an easier mind; so that she was really happy when the shock was over. She was much amused by hearing that her "Hints for the Education of a young Princess," after having been for twenty years excluded from publication in the republican atmosphere of the United States, had at last been brought out there as a valuable literary work. "I have conquered America," she merrily exclaimed.

Her memory, however, began to fail at times, and though at others there was the old sparkle of vivacity, there were slight confusions and repetitions; and as time went on, it became needful to keep her from the strain and exhaustion of visitors. In the autumn of 1832 a great shock befell her in the death of her friend Miss Roberts; and in November, after a heavy cold on her chest, "a degree of bewilderment, or mild delirium" set in and continued at short intervals during the ten months that remained of her life. Even then she could still read without spectacles, and

hear perfectly, and retained her comeliness of appearance; nor did she suffer, but was uniformly cheerful, enjoying the Psalms, and often when they were read to her, finishing the verse. Once, indeed, she said, "My dear, do people never die? Oh, glorious grave!" When the last day came her face suddenly brightened, she tried to raise herself and stretched out her arms, crying, "Patty, joy!" It was the last time she spoke, though she lived some hours longer, and breathed her life away on the 7th of September, 1833, when eighty-eight years of age.

On the 13th, the worn-out body was laid to rest beside those of her four sisters in the churchyard at Wrington. Her directions had been to avoid all pomp and display — only that suits of mourning were to be given to fifteen old men whom she had selected — but there were endless spontaneous tokens of respect. Every church in Bristol tolled its bell as the funeral passed through the streets. All the neighboring gentlemen met the procession a mile from the church, and fell into the rear; and for half a mile the road was crowded with country people mostly in mourning, and two hundred school-children, with a large number of clergy, preceded the coffin into church.

Hannah More's property was worth about

thirty thousand pounds. Having no near relations, she left ten thousand pounds between various charities in London and at Bristol, with bequests to her clubs at Cheddar and Shipham. But her truly valuable legacy was not only the example of what one woman could be and could do, but a real influence on the tone of education in all classes of English women.

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